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My Own Life & Times.

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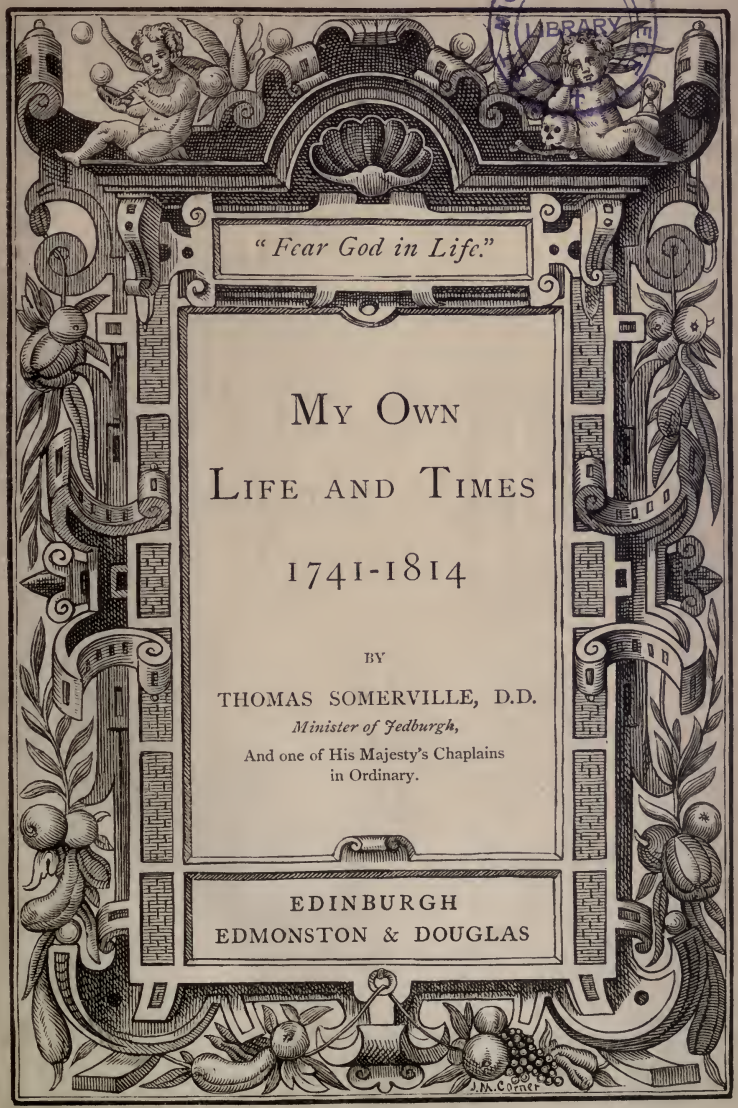


"*Fear God in Life.*"

My Own Life and Times

1741-1814

BY

THOMAS SOMERVILLE, D.D.
Minister of Jedburgh,
And one of His Majesty's Chaplains
in Ordinary.

EDINBURGH
EDMONSTON & DOUGLAS

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

THOMAS SOMERVILLE, D.D., Minister of Jedburgh, the author of the following Memoirs, was, as he himself informs us, born on the 26th of February (old style) 1741. He died on the 16th of May 1830, in the ninetieth year of his age. He had thus lived through the whole of the long and eventful reign of George the Third, having indeed nearly reached manhood at the date of its commencement, and survived its close more than ten years. It was an age not only of great events and great men, but one also characterized—especially in Scotland—by social

changes hardly less memorable. Its nearness to our own times has added to the interest, for many reasons, felt by us in whatever relates to the epoch in question. Nor has that interest been lessened, but on the contrary greatly increased,—indeed it has been mainly created,—by the copious illustration which the history, and, above all, the personal and domestic history of the whole period has already received.

With regard to the opportunities of observation enjoyed by the author of the present autobiography, and his claim generally to be heard as a chronicler of his own Life and Times, enough is probably said in the few sentences of introduction, or may be gathered from the work itself. That he was one of the latest survivors of a past generation is the ground on which he himself seems chiefly to assert the privilege of writing these Memoirs. His life, however, was not only greatly prolonged, but, in its comparatively narrow sphere, had been more than usually active and varied. He refers to his frequent, and occasionally intimate, inter-

course with many of the best known and some of the most distinguished of his contemporaries. The list included such names as those of Burke, Robertson, Dugald Stewart, Fox, Henry Dundas, Sir Gilbert Elliot, the Duke of Portland, Mr. Pitt, President Blair, Sir Henry Moncreiff and Dr. Erskine, Lord Kames, Henry Mackenzie, Lord Minto, Sir Walter Scott. He had, however, not less ample opportunities of becoming personally acquainted with the middle and the humbler classes of society than—whether as regards rank or intellectual cultivation—with the highest; and perhaps the portions of this autobiography which by many readers will be found the most attractive, are those in which the minister of Jedburgh speaks of the social condition and social usages of his own parishioners, as these had been familiar to him in all their changes during a course of pastoral labours extending over a period of more than sixty years. Dr. Somerville is known as the author of two historical works—the Histories of the Revolution, and of the Reign of Queen Anne—which, be-

sides other acknowledged merits, are distinguished by their fairness and impartiality. The same qualities will, it is believed, be found in this less elaborate performance, and, more especially, great candour and liberality on the author's part in his judgments of the personal conduct and character of other men, with an absence of anything approaching either to pretension or reticence in his not very frequent or obtrusive allusions to himself and his own affairs.

The work was written in the years 1813 and 1814, and appears to have been revised on more than one occasion afterwards. It was intended for publication; and it may be proper to state, that in allowing an interval of nearly half a century to elapse before making it public, the representatives of the author have, as in now committing it to the press, acted in fulfilment of his own instructions. A few notes have been supplied by the Editor, chiefly for the purpose of identifying the persons whose names are introduced in the course of the work. These

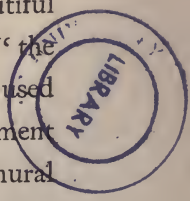
annotations will sometimes, perhaps, appear superfluous; but, upon the whole, it has been thought advisable to follow a uniform rule on the occasion of any name being mentioned for the first time.

Some account may be here given of the last years of the author, for the sake of completing the narrative. There is not much to be told. Dr. Somerville concludes his own recollections by expressing his gratitude to God that up to the advanced age of seventy-three, which he had then reached, he had been favoured with uninterrupted good health, and that he was still in possession of the capacity of discharging the ordinary duties of his profession, as well as enjoying the many blessings that remained to him. With hardly any qualification, the same language might have been used by him in his ninetieth year, and until within a few days of his death. He never ceased to be able to take delight in the society of his friends; or to find pleasure in his books—to the last, too, keeping himself abreast with the literature of the day;—or to feel

a keen interest in public events and questions; or, above all, to retain that active solicitude for the welfare (both temporal and spiritual) of every individual member of his flock, which, in a very remarkable degree, characterized him throughout his long and useful life. Mr. Lockhart, who, at this period, "spent many pleasant hours under his hospitable roof with Sir Walter Scott," speaks of him as "preserving his faculties quite entire to a great old age," and says, "We heard him preach an excellent circuit sermon when he was upwards of eighty-two; and at the judge's dinner afterwards, he was among the gayest of the company."—(*Life of Sir W. Scott*, ch. viii.) In the year 1828, a public dinner was given to him by his co-presbyters and some of his other friends, on the occasion of his completing the sixtieth year of his ministry. He was by that time the father of the Church of Scotland, having outlived the whole of those of his brethren who were ministers of the Church at the date of his own ordination. On Sunday the 9th of May 1830—to quote an obituary notice in a

contemporary newspaper—"he preached and dispensed the Lord's Supper to his people, with much animation, ability, and feeling, alluding in the close of the service to the probability that it might be the last occasion of the kind on which they might meet together. . . . . He took a solemn leave of them on that Sunday afternoon, and gave them what might be considered his parting admonition and benediction. 'Yet his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.' In the course of the same evening he became seriously indisposed, ... and on the evening of the following Sabbath he departed peacefully, rejoicing in the hopes and consolations of the gospel."

Dr. Somerville is buried in the Lady Chapel of Jedburgh Abbey—a portion of that beautiful ruin, which also goes by the name of "the Latiner's aisle," having at one time been used as a Grammar School; and, besides a monument erected over the grave by his family, a mural tablet was placed in the parish church a short



time after his death by the heritors of Jedburgh, "AS A MEMORIAL OF THEIR HIGH ESTEEM AND RESPECT FOR HIS PUBLIC SERVICES AND PRIVATE WORTH"—esteem and respect which, it may be here added, were largely shared by the whole of his parishioners, without distinction of sect or party, and by a wide circle of personal friends.

W. L.

ROXBURGH, 25TH MARCH 1861.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.—1741-1759.

PAGE

Introduction...Family History...My Father's Marriage ...Death of my Mother...The School of Dunse... A Free-thinking Schoolmaster... Attendance at the University... Edinburgh College a Hundred Years ago ... Provost Drummond's University Reforms ... Death and Character of my Father...Hospitalities at the Manse of Hawick...Allan Ramsay...Remove to Edinburgh and become a Student of Theology ... Consul Davidson...My First Communion...Sir James Burges...Belles Lettres Society ... President Blair and Henry Dundas...Theological Society...Tavern Adjournments...Provost Drummond 1-48

CHAPTER II.—1759-1764.

Edinburgh in 1760...State of the Country at the Accession of George III...Lord Bute and the Peace of

PAGE

Paris ... Mr. Thomas Sheridan's Lectures in Edinburgh ... Edinburgh Ministers at this Period ... State of the Church after the Revolution ... George Whitefield ... Church Parties in Scotland ... Schism Overture ... Ecclesiastical Leaders: Notices of Jardine, Robertson, Campbell, Dick, Erskine, Witherspoon, Crosbie, and Webster ... Court of Session and Scottish Lawyers ... The Douglas Cause ... The Canongate Playhouse ... Tragedy of "Douglas" . . . 49-117

CHAPTER III.—1764-1769.

License as a Preacher ... A Twofold Disappointment ... Settlement at Minto ... Sir Gilbert Elliot ... Literary Society at Minto House ... Robert Riccaltoun and Thomson's "Winter" ... Joannes Brunonius ... First Visit to London ... Sir Gilbert Elliot ... Levee at St. James' ... Mr. Strahan's Sunday Dinners ... Dr. Richard Price and Gilbert Stuart ... Courts of Law ... Fox's Maiden Speech in the House of Commons ... Popular Preachers at this Time in London ... Garrick ... King's Bench Prison and Mr. Wilkes ... Return to Scotland: A Bank Parcel . . . 118-165

CHAPTER IV.—1769-1779.

Marriage ... Translation to Jedburgh ... Origin of the Relief Church ... Visit to Harrogate and Scarborough

... Roxburghshire Election and Fictitious Votes... PAGE
Visit to London in 1779... A Travelling Companion... Sir John Fielding's Office... Clerkenwell and Newgate... Debates in Parliament on the American War, and the Petition against Subscription... Expense of Travelling 166-190

CHAPTER V.—1779-1785.

Catholic Question..."No Popery" Outrages of 1779... My own Conduct during this Crisis...1779 and 1813...My Pamphlet on the American War... Attempt to Grow Tobacco on the Glebe of Jedburgh, and Result of the Speculation... Authorship ...Choice of a Subject... Mr. Elliot of Wells... Visit to London in 1785...British Museum...Dr. Woide... Hardwicke Papers... Mrs. Siddons... Mr. Pitt...Williams' Universal Liturgy...The Bereans 191-219

CHAPTER VI.—1785-1791.

Mr. Burke at Minto...Admiral Greig...Test and Corporation Acts as affecting Scotland...Debate in the Assembly on the Question...Deputation to London ...Interviews with Lord Minto, Henry Dundas, Mr. Fox, Sir William Pulteney, etc...Meeting at Lord Malmesbury's... The Debate in the Commons...

PAGE

Results of our Movement...Progress of my Literary Labours...Arrangement with Strahan and Cadell... Twickenham...Peter Pindar...Mr. Burke...Rev. John Wesley...Return to Scotland . . . 220-254

CHAPTER VII.—1791-1796.

Publication of my History of William III....Contemporary Criticism ... Character of Sir William Pulteney ... The Slave Trade ... The French Revolution ... Undertake the History of the Reign of Queen Anne ...Conversation with Principal Robertson in 1792... Scottish Representatives in Parliament after the Union...Whigs and Tories in the Reign of Anne... Visit to Buxton in 1793 ... Archdeacon Coxe and the Townshend Papers ... Proposal by Strahan and Cadell for a History of the Reign of George III. ...Completion of my History of Queen Anne . 255-293

CHAPTER VIII.—1796-1800.

James, Lord Somerville ... Dr. William Somerville ... Aspect of Public Affairs in the end of the Eighteenth Century ... Battle of Camperdown ... Sir William Fairfax...Pension from the King...London in 1800 ...The Duke of Portland...Presentation at Court... Mr. Pitt and the Union...Lord Hardwicke...Lord Macartney ... Dr. George Gregory ... George Chal-

mers ... Archdeacon Coxe ... Lord Macartney's Dinners ... Visit to Mr. Dundas at Wimbledon ... Greenwich Hospital ... Review in Hyde Park ... Bishop Porteous ... Mungo Park's Travels ... Sea Passage to Scotland 294-325

PAGE

CHAPTER IX.—1741-1800.

Scotland in my Early Life: Dress of the People...Food and Cooking...Kitchen-Gardens...Use of Butcher Meat ... Household Furniture ... The *Dais* and *Loupin'-on-Stane*...State of the Country Towns ... Servants ... Neglect of Sanitary Laws ... Small-pox and Ague ... National Amusements ... Penny Weddings...Schools...Trades and Manufactures...Posts and Post-Offices...State of the Public Roads...Inns ...Stage-Coaches...Value of Land ... State of Agriculture...Religious Observances...Belief in Witchcraft and Apparitions...Last Duties to the Dead... Social Habits...Conviviality and Intemperance... Intolerance in Religion ... Class Distinctions ... Administration of Public Affairs...Charitable Efforts and Associations...Literature 325-385

CHAPTER X.—1800-1814.

Death of my Wife ... Mr. Walter Scott ... Mrs. Mary Somerville...Conclusion 386-392

CHAPTER I.

1741-1759.

THE following Memoirs of my own Life and Times owed their origin to an accident—the rupture of the *tendo Achillis* of my right leg—which I met with in the summer of 1813 when visiting my daughter, Mrs. Pringle,* at Ferney Green, in Westmoreland. After I had been confined for a few weeks to bed, or a chair, reading became tiresome, and my thoughts unprofitable and often unpleasant. Having been favoured by Dr. Watson, bishop of Landaff, with the perusal of his life in manuscript,† it struck me that a similar work might in my case prove a resource against the oppression of indolence, with-

* Now Mrs. Elliot of Rosebank.

† This work, entitled "Anecdotes of the Life of Richard Watson, bishop of Landaff, written by himself at different intervals, and revised in 1814," was published by his son in 1817.—Ed.

out involving, what I was not fit for at the time, severe application, or the fatigue of research. I was satisfied that I should not want an abundant store of materials. From the perusal of these memoirs it will appear, that notwithstanding the obscurity of my position, I have enjoyed considerable opportunities of becoming acquainted with the eminent men of my own time, and that I have not been an inattentive observer of passing events. For a few years, in my early life, I was in the habit of keeping a diary; and although I soon tired of the drudgery to which this practice subjected me, I long afterwards continued not only to record such occurrences as were interesting to my own family, but occasionally to enter in a commonplace book my observations on matters of public importance. I have also preserved my correspondence; and in carrying on this work I have had recourse to unassisted recollection only with respect to early incidents which, however trivial, take the strongest hold of the memory.

It must be remembered that my own amusement was the primary motive of my undertaking, and the principal object I had in view in the prosecution of it. As a further apology for what

may appear a superabundance of unimportant incidents and observations, I wish it to be also recollected that notices of those matters which, from their familiarity, appear too trifling to attract the attention of the contemporary historian, acquire value at least in the next generation.

I am a descendant of the ancient family of Somerville of Cambusnethan, which was a branch of the Somervilles of Drum, ennobled in the year 1424. About the end of the seventeenth century, the representative of the family of Cambusnethan assumed the title of Corhouse, after the alienation of the estate of Cambusnethan. My grandfather was one of his sons. Upon the death, fifty years ago, of George Somerville of Corhouse, I became the only male representative of the family.*

* After the death of George Somerville, the estate of Corhouse was sold by his sisters, the grandmother and grandaunts of Colonel Lockhart and Dr. Lockhart, one of the ministers of Glasgow. [It became afterwards the property of Mr. George Cranstoun, advocate, who, as one of the Lords of Session derived from it his title of Lord Corehouse. For a very curious account of the marriage, in 1651, of James, eleventh Lord Somerville, to Martha, daughter of Bannatyne of Corhouse, through whom the estate seems to have come into the family, see the *Memorie of the Somervilles*, Vol. ii. p. 461, etc. The Rev. Dr. Lockhart mentioned above, was the father of John Gibson Lockhart.—Ed.]

My grandfather was educated for the Church, and presented to the parish of Cavers, by the bishop of Glasgow, in the year 1674.* Episcopacy being the established form of religion at that

* The institution did not take place till August 1675, and was not then effected without some difficulty, and even personal hazard. The following account is from the records of the Presbytery:—"At Jedburgh, 7th September 1675.—This day report was made of the meeting of the Presbytery at Cavers, the 18th day of August; the whilk day the brethren being convened to give institution to Mr. Thomas Somerville, conform to the Archbishop [Alexander Burnet, the successor, as he had been the predecessor, of Leighton] his order, and the Presbytery's ordinance, they found the church and churchyard door fast shut; whereupon they sent the Presbytery officer to Sir William Douglas (of Cavers) his house to demand the keys; but he could not get access neither to Sir William nor his lady; only met with their daughter, whose answer was that no keys were to be had there; so that the brethren were necessitate, without preaching and ordinary solemnities, to give Mr. Thomas Somerville institution at the kirk style. Likewise it was ordained that a letter should be written to the Archbishop, to acquaint his Grace of this affront; and also that, when they came to execute his Grace's commands, a number of women were convened in the churchyard, with their laps full of stones, as a guard to keep us out of church and churchyard; and besides, that some women railed on us, calling us soul murderers, and the devil's servants." Sir William Douglas and his wife were among those who suffered for their nonconformity, in the reign of Charles II.—the former, who died in 1676, having been deprived of the Sheriffship of the county by the Government; and the latter, sometimes called "the good Lady Cavers," imprisoned for two years (from 1682 till 1684), in the castle of Stirling, and only then released on her son's giving his bond that she would either conform, or leave the country within fourteen days. She adopted the latter alternative.—Ed.

time, he resigned, or forfeited, his living after the Revolution, and, as I have heard from my father, not on account of any religious scruple, or objection to the presbyterian form of Church government; but having taken the oath of allegiance to King James, he thought he could not conscientiously transfer his allegiance to King William. He died in the prime of life, at Hawick, where he had continued to perform clerical duty in his own lodgings, being attended by such as adhered to Episcopacy and the interest of King James, among whom were a few gentlemen of the most ancient families in the country.

After the death of my grandfather, his widow, with her children—my father and two daughters, all then young—moved to East Lothian, to be in the vicinity of her brother, Mr. Burnside, who had married the heiress of Whitelaw, and taken her name. My father was destined for the Church, and, after having attended the University of Edinburgh, was for some time employed as a tutor in the neighbouring family of Lord Elibank,* nearly

* Alexander, fourth Lord Elibank, who died in 1735. Of his sons (some or all of whom were under the care of Mr. Somerville), the first succeeded to the peerage, as also did the second, who was in the navy,

related to that of Whitelaw. In 1720 he was licensed as a preacher, and became an inmate in the family of Lord Somerville,* where he remained entrusted with the principal direction of Lord Somerville's affairs, till his ordination to be minister of Hawick, in 1731.

My father's marriage took place in March 1732. I was the fifth child, born 26th February —old style—1741. My mother was the only child of Mr. Grierson, minister of Queensferry, in the Presbytery of Linlithgow, and lived with her widowed mother in Dalkeith, in the vicinity of Drum, where my father was introduced to her acquaintance. She was then, as I have been told by many who well remember her, esteemed the greatest beauty in Dalkeith. She inherited from

and accompanied Lord Anson in his voyage round the world (he afterwards became admiral); the third was Prebendary of Durham; the fourth, Alexander, an officer in the army, took an active part in the great Westminster election in 1750, in connection with which he was, by order of the House of Commons, imprisoned in Newgate during the whole session of 1751; the fifth, James, a general in the army, was appointed Governor of Canada in 1763, and subsequently distinguished himself by his gallant but unsuccessful defence of Minorca, in 1781.—*Burke's Peerage.*—Ed.

* James, thirteenth Lord Somerville, the restorer of the family. He died in 1742.—Ed.

her father £500, considered at that period as a liberal provision for one of her rank. I remember little about my mother, whom, to my great sorrow, I lost in my eighth year—10th June 1749—except her teaching me to say my prayers every morning at her bed-side, and hearing me read a chapter in the Bible when her health permitted. There are passages of the Gospel which I never peruse to this day, without the recollection of her figure and attitude, sitting in her chair when I was reading to her. She was greatly beloved in her family, and much esteemed by all who knew her, for her good sense, her affability and uncommon charity to her poor neighbours, and her remarkable cheerfulness during the intermissions of a severe illness, which hung upon her for many years.

After having attended first the English, and then the grammar school, at Hawick, I was sent, in June 1752, to the school of Dunse, and placed under the care of my relation, Mr. Dickson.* This

* The Rev. Adam Dickson, minister of Dunse, and afterwards of Whittingham. He was author of a well-known "Treatise on Agriculture," published in two vols. in 1762, 1769. Dr. Carlyle (*Autobiography*, p. 65), describes him, in 1742, when a fellow-student, as "Adam Dickson who afterwards wrote so well on husbandry . . . . open, frank,

event, though it removed me from intercourse with my beloved father, which I never again enjoyed for any length of time, I have reason to believe contributed to my advantage in after life. Being an only son, I was perhaps treated with too much indulgence at home, which, if it had been prolonged, would have aggravated the difficulties I was destined to encounter, and might have unfitted me for the exertions I had to make, in consequence of losing my father at an early period of life. Mr. Cruikshank had obtained, deservedly, high reputation as an excellent classical teacher. Both his method of teaching and his conduct—I mean within the walls of the school—have, however, on mature reflection, suggested just grounds of censure. He confined the scholars too long to a servile use of translations. Corderius, Erasmus' Dialogues, and Cornelius Nepos, with the Latin in one column and the English in another, were our first school books; and when Cæsar's Commentaries, Ovid's Metamorphoses, etc., unaccompanied with translations, were put into our hands,

and generous, pretending only to what he was, and supporting his title with spirit." He was killed by a fall from his horse in 1776, as noticed in the sequel.—Ed.

he read over and translated the whole lesson, not leaving any part of it to be made out by the scholars. His discipline was capricious, and often passionate. He did not know what it was to cherish a generous ambition in his pupils by praise or rewards; and when he withheld the rod, he pursued them no less severely by raillery, which, to bashful boys, was more tormenting than stripes. But the heaviest charge I have to bring against my old master, is not only the absence of religious principle, and the neglect of inculcating it, but the making that defect apparent by a "jesting that was not convenient," or indecent sneers and innuendoes with respect to certain portions of sacred history, and the doctrines of revelation, too obvious to escape the discernment of his scholars. Fortified by the impressions of a pious education, I thank God that this wantonness or indiscretion never excited in my mind any other feelings than those of vexation and fear. But upon some of my companions it produced a different and most pernicious effect; and in their sentiments in mature life, I have traced those seeds of scepticism and irreligion, which were sinking into their hearts before they were aware of their danger.

I entered a student in the University of Edinburgh in November 1756. That institution has greatly advanced in character and efficiency since my time. Indeed, many as are the improvements which, during the course of my long life, have been introduced into all the educational establishments of this country, in none of them has the progress been more marked than in the University of Edinburgh.

The first session I attended the *public*, or first Greek class, and the second, or *private* Latin, as they were then called, and the first elementary class of Mathematics; in the second session, the Logic, private Greek, and second class of Mathematics; in the third, the Natural and Moral Philosophy classes, at the same time getting my name, by special favour, enrolled as a student of Divinity.*

* The rule at this time was, that candidates for the ministry should "attend the profession of divinity" for at least six years, "after having passed their course of philosophy at the college." About twenty years after the period referred to in the text, it was enacted that "none be admitted to trials in order to be licensed but such as have produced to the professor of Divinity *at the time of being enrolled*, either a diploma of master of arts, or a certificate bearing that they have gone through a full course of philosophy at the College." This continues the law of the Church. The "full course of philosophy" includes Latin, Greek, Logic, Mathe-

Mr. Hunter,* the professor of Greek at that time, was esteemed one of the best classical scholars in Scotland. His method of teaching, however, did not differ materially from that of most country schoolmasters.

Mr. Stewart,† who taught the Latin class, was not only a complete master of that language, but possessed a correctness and refinement of taste which enabled him, with judgment and good feeling, to direct his pupils in appreciating the characteristic beauties of the classics. He did not go far certainly into critical discussions, nor pay so much attention as has been done by his successors to antiquities, geography, prosody, and other matters more or less nearly related to the literature of ancient Rome. The Latin class was thinly attended. More than one-half of the students began their course of study with the

matics, Moral Philosophy, and Natural Philosophy, "which the student must attend in such order as is prescribed" in his own university, for candidates for the degree of M.A.—Ed.

* Mr. Robert Hunter died in 1779; he had some years before (1773) resigned his professorship, when he was succeeded by Mr. Andrew Dalziel, who did so much to revive a taste for classical learning in the University.—Ed.

† George Stewart, after having been professor for fifty-two years, died 18th June 1793.

Greek, and many with the Logic class, the result being that some of them were extremely deficient in classical learning.

The Logic class, taught by Dr. Stevenson* was, in its different branches, the most dry and barren, and the most inviting and profitable of all the classes of which I had any knowledge. The students met two hours daily. One of the hours was devoted exclusively to lectures on Logic, *Heineccii Elementa*† being the text-book employed. The chief objection to these lectures which I shall notice was their being composed in Latin. To understand a language by the eye, and by the ear, are distinct attainments, depending very much upon previous habit; and a person who reads a dead language fluently, and with accuracy, may be incapable of understanding it otherwise than very imperfectly, when spoken. The difficulty is aggravated if, as in the case now referred to, technical terms and other phrases are necessarily introduced, which are not to be found in the classics, and with which, therefore, the student has not been previously conversant. But

* Appointed in 1730; died Sept. 12, 1775, in his eighty-first year.

† *Heineccii Elementa Philosophiæ Rationalis et Moralis.*

the matter of Dr. Stevenson's lectures on Logic was in great part hardly less antiquated than the form. In particular, the doctrine of syllogisms was too largely insisted upon, and a paramount respect to the authority of that mode of argument recommended in the investigation of truth. I should mention that Wynne's Abridgment of Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding was read, and commented on, as a part of Dr. Stevenson's Logical course. Besides, however, that assigned to Logic, this Professor employed another hour in teaching *Belles Lettres*. His usual method was, to call upon the students to read a prescribed portion of Aristotle's *Ars Poetica*, or Longinus on the Sublime, and then himself to add a copious exposition of the passage, often accompanied with critical remarks, which were both instructive and amusing. He also occasionally read lectures on the cardinal points of criticism suggested by the text-books now mentioned; and although not written with much attention to elegance or arrangement, his lectures included some judicious philological discussions, as well as many excellent examples and useful practical rules of composition. I derived more substantial benefit from these

exercises and lectures than from all the public classes which I attended at the University.*

In the year of my attendance at the Natural Philosophy class, the then Professor of Natural Philosophy, Dr. John Stewart, was languishing under an affection of the chest, and soon found it necessary to retire from duty.† Dr. Matthew Stewart,‡ the Professor of Mathematics, supplied his place,

* Similar testimonies to the merits of this Professor have been borne by some of the most distinguished of his pupils. "To Dr. Stevenson's valuable prelections (particularly to his illustrations of Aristotle's Poetics, and of Longinus on the Sublime)," writes Mr. Dugald Stewart, "Dr. Robertson has been often heard to say that he considered himself more deeply indebted than to any other circumstance in his academical studies." *Life and Writings of Principal Robertson*, p. 5. His method of instruction is described with more detail than in the text, and is not less warmly commended, by Dr. Erskine.—See Moncreiff's *Life of Erskine*, pp. 19-21. In the College Library there is still preserved a selection of the essays written for the logic class by pupils of Dr. Stevenson, as a part of their customary exercises. It includes two theses (in the handwritings of their authors), which were delivered on the same day—April 30, 1737—by Dr. Robertson and Dr. Erskine, and which, according to a writer in the *Scots Magazine* for February 1803, "shew an acquaintance with philosophical discussions that could have been little expected from boys of little more than fifteen years."—Ed.

† He died before the close of the Session (May 12, 1759).—Ed.

‡ Dr. Matthew Stewart [born 1717, died 1785, and before his appointment to the chair, minister of the parish of Roseneath] was the father of Mr. Dugald Stewart, who first succeeded him as Professor of Mathematics, and was afterwards transferred to the professorship of Moral Philosophy, in which more congenial department of science he has ac-

and confined himself almost entirely to mathematical demonstrations, which few of the students were capable of following. We therefore derived more amusement than instruction from the exhibition of the experiments performed expertly by Mr. Short.

Even in his own department, Dr. Matthew Stewart, though perhaps the first mathematician of his age, as appears from his publications, was unfortunately found deficient in the qualifications of a teacher. He could not deviate from the standard of consummate science, or accommodate himself to the capacity of his scholars. Besides, he was of a disposition so bashful and sensitive, that the slightest irregularity, or approach to rudeness, in the behaviour of the students, disconcerted him. The misconduct of any of these boys, for such most of his pupils were, instead of meeting with a reproof from the Professor, made him blush like a child. With the exception of those of them who enjoyed the assistance of private tutors, and those who had a decided natural predilection for mathematics, none of the students in my time were masters of the propo-

quired a European celebrity, and contributed more than almost any other man to the reputation of the University.

sitions, or derived any considerable mathematical knowledge from attending the public class.

The Moral Philosophy class was ill attended, and often omitted altogether, even by the students destined for liberal professions. No fees were paid. The professorship was considered, indeed, a sinecure office, and did not call forth the exertions of the teacher, Mr. Balfour of Pilrig,* whose lectures consisted of a sort of desultory extemporaneous illustrations of the text of Puffendorf, *De Jure Civis.* From this description I must except a few, not above six lectures, elaborately composed, which were read to us about the end of the session, and were so popular that I remember the students, in the year of my attendance, requested a repetition of them—a request the Professor had the goodness to comply with, at

* According to Sir H. Moncreiff (*Life of Erskine*, p. 179), when Professor Balfour's appointment to the chair of Moral Philosophy took place, Mr. Hume was an unsuccessful candidate. Mr. Hume's rejection, however, occurred in 1745, at the time of the appointment of Mr. Balfour's predecessor, Mr. Cleghorn—(See Burton's *Life of Hume*, vol. i., p. 170). In the case of this chair, and some others, it was then usual, in conformity with the constitution of the University, for the patrons (the Town Council) to take the advice of the ministers of Edinburgh, who, when consulted on the occasion now referred to, gave a decided opinion against Mr. Hume, on account of his avowed scepticism in religion.—Ed.

least partially. They were intended to refute the doctrines contained in some of Mr. Hume's Essays, then universally read, particularly those on the Active Powers, Cause and Effect, Liberty and Necessity. These lectures have been since published,* and shew that Professor Balfour was not deficient either in philosophical acumen or in a talent for elegant composition.

The Divinity Chair was filled by Professor Hamilton,† whose recent appointment had given general satisfaction, on account of his excellent character and acknowledged learning. He delivered theological lectures on the text of Pictet‡ on four days of the week, and also gave a weekly lecture on Biblical Criticism. The former wanted compression, so that I think he did not complete his exposition of the system in less than five or

* In 1782, under the title of *Philosophical Dissertations*.—Ed.

† He belonged to a branch of the family of Preston, and was a son of the Rev. William Hamilton, formerly principal of the University. His own son, Dr. James Hamilton, physician to the Royal Infirmary, was long well known in Edinburgh for his professional skill, and benevolence of character, no less than in later years for the singularity of his dress, as, till the time of his death in 1835, he continued to wear clothes made in the fashion of his youth, not excepting the cocked hat, a peculiarity which gave rise to the sobriquet by which he must still be remembered by many of the present generation.—Ed.

‡ *Ben. Picteti Theologia Christiana.*

six sessions. His critical lectures, composed in English, although judicious and learned, entered, perhaps, too minutely into verbal and controversial criticism. The Saturday was assigned to the probationary exercises of the students; and the remarks of the professor on these exercises exhibited favourable evidence of his temper, liberality, and good taste. His short strictures on style were so correct, that one would have expected a nearer approach to elegance in his own composition.

The success, as a teacher, of Professor Robertson,* who filled the Hebrew chair, was by no means equal to his zeal, or perhaps to his merits. When I was a student of divinity Hebrew was little cultivated, or altogether omitted, by the greater number of the theological students.

Dr. Cuming, Regius Professor of Divinity,† as required by the terms of his appointment, delivered a lecture once a week, during four months of the session, on Church History. Attendance at this class not being an indispensable qualification for

* The Reverend James Robertson, D.D. He died at an advanced age, in the year 1795.

† He was also one of the ministers of the city, and for sometime the leader of *the Moderate party* (as they called themselves) in the General Assembly. Dr. Cuming died in 1776, in his eighty-first year.—Ed.

probationary trials, few of the divinity students attended. The lectures were composed in Latin; but after the first, the professor began every prelection by recapitulating the preceding one in English. This practice seemed to imply a concession to the opinion I have stated with regard to the preference due to the use of the vernacular language in academical teaching.

Notwithstanding the comparatively inefficient state of the University of Edinburgh at the period of which I have been treating,* those influences

* In the *Scots Magazine* for August 1741, there is "a short account of the University of Edinburgh, the present professors in it, and the several parts of learning taught by them" at that time—fifteen years before Dr. Somerville became a student. As this account is said (*Report of University Commission of* 1826, *Edinburgh*, vol. ii. p. 595) to have been supplied by the professors themselves, it may be worth while to give an abstract of it.

The Professors of Divinity were, Principal Wishart, Mr. John Gowdie, and the above mentioned Rev. Patrick Cuming; only the two latter lectured.

There were three Professors of Law; the Professor of Civil Law using, as his text-books, Van Muyden's *Compend*, Justinian's *Institutions*, and Voet's *Compend*; the Professor of Scots Law, Sir Geo. Mackenzie's *Institutions*; and the Professor of the Laws of Nature and Nations, Grotius *de jure belli et pacis*.

In Medicine, there was a Professor of Botany (who "gives lectures on the *Materia Medica*, and *Methodus præscribendi*; and in summer teaches botany in the town's physic garden") and Professors of Chemistry, of Anatomy, of the Theory of Physic, and of the Practice of Physic. The Professor of Anatomy was "Mr. Alexander Monro, F.R.S." He

were even then beginning to operate which have since advanced it to its present deservedly high reputation as a seat of learning. In particular,

gave "a course of anatomy, human and comparative, chirurgical operations and bandages." In the two last-named classes, the text-books were, Dr. Boerhaave's *Institutiones Medicæ*, and the same author's *Aphorismi de cognoscendis et curandis morbis*.

In Arts and Sciences, the first professor in the list is Mr. R. Stewart, of the Natural Philosophy class. Among the text-books of Mr. Stewart were "a manuscript of his own writing" on Hydrostatics and Pneumatics, Dr. David Gregory's *Optics* and *Astronomy*, and Sir Isaac Newton's Treatise on Colours, and *Principia*. The next is "a Professor of Greek and Philosophy," for the benefit of medical students. Then Mr. Colin Maclaurin, Professor of Mathematics—he was recommended for that chair by Sir Isaac Newton—" gives three several different colleges (classes), and sometimes a fourth," in which, besides the science of mathematics, "he insists on surveying, fortification, and other practical parts," " treats fully of astronomy and optics," giving also " geographical lectures once in the fortnight." He likewise "begins a college of experimental philosophy, about the middle of December, which continues thrice every week till the beginning of April; *and at proper hours of the night, describes the constellations, and shews the planets by telescopes of various kinds.*" The next professorship mentioned is that of History, filled by Mr. John Mackay, who states, that "to render the Latin tongue more familiar to the young gentlemen who attend his lectures, he uses only that tongue in both his colleges." There is then a very full account of the method of " Mr. John Stevenson, Professor of Rational or Instrumental Philosophy." In addition to the particulars regarding the teaching of this eminent professor, mentioned by Dr. Somerville, it may be stated, that besides a class of logic and a class of rhetoric, he taught, at a separate hour, "a college upon Heineccii Historia Philosophica," and that each of his students was "required to make a discourse upon a subject assigned him, and to impugn and defend a thesis for their improvement in the art of reasoning," (see *supra*, p. 14, note)—these

the celebrity of Dr. Alexander Monro,* Professor of Anatomy, brought many students to Edinburgh from every part of Britain, and even some from the Continent. He lectured in English. His style was fluent, elegant, and perspicuous, and his pronunciation perhaps more correct than that of any public speaker in Scotland at this time. I heard his concluding lecture at the end of the session 1757; and I think I had never before been as much captivated with the power and beauty of

exercises being "performed before the principal, and some of the professors, with open doors." The text-books of Dr. (afterwards Sir) John Pringle's class of "Pneumatical and Ethical Philosophy," were "chiefly Cicero, Marcus Antoninus, Puffendorf, and Lord Bacon." He also prescribed essays to his students, to be delivered before the principal, and with open doors. The other professors were those of Hebrew, Humanity, and Greek,—the last, in his "usual elementary college" teaching the Grammar, the New Testament, a Delectus, containing some fables of Æsop, some of Lucian's Dialogues, two orations of Isocrates, and the table (fable?) of Cebes, three or four books of Homer's Iliad, and Upton's Collection; and, in his more advanced class, the Iliad, the Orations of Æschines and Desmosthenes *pro corona*, and a portion of Euripides. The duration of the session varied in different classes. The term of the Humanity class was the longest, commencing on the 1st of October and continuing "till July or August." In some of the others, it was restricted, as at present, to a period of about six months.—Ed.

* Dr. A. Monro *primus*. (Born 1697, died 1767.) He resigned his chair in the University in 1759 in favour of his son, the not less eminent Dr. Alexander Monro *secundus*, who had for some years been nominally his colleague.—Ed.

eloquent discourse. The purpose of his address was to impress on his students the moral and religious improvement of the science of Anatomy, as it displayed evidence of the wisdom, power, and infinite goodness of the Creator, whom, in conclusion, he entreated them with great solemnity, in the words of the wise man, to remember "now," "in the days of their youth." The fame and success of Dr. Monro suggested to Provost Drummond,* who had long presided in the Town Council (the patrons of the University), that the welfare of the city and University, and also of the country at large, might be greatly promoted by due care being taken in the appointments to the Medical chairs, which, he proposed, should thenceforth be invariably filled by the fittest men, irrespectively of personal influence.† There was the

* Born 1687, died 1766.

† The corruption of the Town Council, in the earlier period of Mr. Drummond's connection with it, was not confined to the administration of the patronage of the University. That eminent citizen left a private diary, still extant, in manuscript, in which there is the following remarkable entry, under the date of April 7, 1737:—"The conduct of our Magistrates for some years past has been very grieving to all good men in the city. *They have been named by the Justice-Clerk, and have prostituted their power to his will in every instance.* The morals of the city has been criminally neglected by them. . . . . They have endeavoured to bear down serious religion, not only here, by *a bad choice of ministers, coun-*

more encouragement to attempt, by this means, founding a great Medical School in Edinburgh, because the Royal Infirmary, which owed its existence to the same patriotic Magistrate, had recently extended the facilities both of medical experience and medical instruction in that city. His liberal plan of exercising patronage was adopted; the various branches of medical education were successively supplied with teachers the most approved and celebrated in their own departments; the number of students multiplied rapidly; and the University of Edinburgh has now become the most illustrious school in Europe for medical instruction. The importance of extending the same advantages to all the other branches of science was obvious. Dr. Robertson* was placed at the head of the University (in 1761). The lustre of his name, together with his zeal in the promotion of the interests and honour of the University, contributed to accelerate that general melioration which has secured for Edinburgh a body of teachers in almost every

cillors, constables, &c., but as far as their influence reaches in the kingdom. . . . . A new constitution to the town is the only way to make it prosper."—Ed.

* William Robertson, D.D. (the historian); born 1721, died 1793.

department of science and literature who are not unworthy of the metropolis of Scotland.

During my first session at College my father died (February 8, 1757) in the sixty-sixth year of his age. Devoutly prizing the inheritance of a father's good name, I shall never cease to keep alive a fond recollection of his many virtues.

Out of several which are fresh in my remembrance, I may here mention one instance of what was, perhaps, the most prominent trait in my father's character—namely, his active sympathy for those of his neighbours who were in affliction, or in unprosperous circumstances. It may serve to throw some light on the state of society in those times. The only surviving representative of the ancient family of Whitslade had settled in Hawick as a physician, but never had been much employed. When he became old and infirm, he had not, perhaps, a single patient except in my father's family, and sank into extreme indigence. As long as I can recollect, he was my father's guest every night at supper; and a piece of meat was always reserved from dinner for 'Dr. Robert' —his common name with the people. Provisions of meal and milk were conveyed in the most

delicate way to his wife. Fortunately, he had no children. As if to apologise to his own family for what might have been considered excessive charity, my father used often to take occasion to mention how kind 'Dr. Robert's' father had been to my grandfather after he had been ejected from his living by the Revolution. But what was also remarkable, his pensioner was such a bigot to Episcopacy and Jacobitism, that he never entered my father's church, and indulged at my father's table, on every fitting opportunity, in invectives against the Presbyterians and Whigs, as if it had been on purpose to rebuke his benefactor for having conformed, and enjoying the emoluments which ministered to his own sustenance. Besides my father's charity, Dr. Robert had no means of livelihood, except occasionally scanty donations from a few gentlemen of the county, distantly related to him; and these donations were often prompted by my father, and conveyed by his hands. I shall never forget his figure. A gentlemanlike person in ruin, tall, meagre, the countenance of hunger and despondency.*

* Mr. Robert Scott, surgeon, died in Hawick soon after Mr. Somerville. From some verses written about 1690, and preserved in Mr.

I will not attempt at any length to describe my father. His character for unshaken integrity was marked, and revered by all who knew him. He had a heartfelt abhorrence of dissimulation. No consideration ever deterred him from expressing his contempt for any one, whatever his rank or influence, who had been guilty of dishonourable conduct. He was enthusiastically attached to his friends,—grudging no labour or expense if he could promote their interests. He was indeed disposed to aid, by every means in his power, all who had any claim on his good offices; and was especially instrumental in opening the path of fortune to many deserving young men, who, had it not been for his exertions, might have remained in obscurity. His piety was intelligent and consistent. I had myself occasion to know how regular he was in the observance of secret devotion. He was blessed with uncommon cheerfulness of spirits, and enjoyed more than any

Wilson's *Annals of Hawick*, it appears that the Scotts of Whitslade were at that time the principal family on Ail-Water:—

"First came Todrig,
Then came Woll,
Last came Whitslade
The chief of the Water-Ail."—Ed.

person I have known, at his advanced age, the company of young persons, to whose happiness he delighted to contribute, by having frequent parties of them at his house to spend the evening in music, dancing, and other amusements suited to their age and taste. His hospitality was proverbial. To clerical friends, and young men destined for the Church, his house was at all times open. I recollect it was the custom every market-day for some of the neighbouring gentlemen and farmers to dine at the manse; and many people who, on these and other occasions, used to be my father's frequent guests, have spoken to me of the cordial welcome which they always met with. In his professional character he was highly respectable. His written discourses, of which he left a great number (though he most commonly preached without writing), most of them practical and expository, were composed after the manner of Clarke and Tillotson, who were his favourite authors. He was well read in history, and although strongly biassed in favour of the family of the Stuarts, an authority among his neighbours in all questions which related to the history of Scotland. With his other popular and

genial qualities, a talent for conversation, and a fund of anecdote, which he had the art of employing felicitously, recommended his society to his friends and acquaintances, of whom he had a great number, both in his own station and among persons of higher rank.

I have spoken of my father's hospitality. It may be amusing to the reader to be more particularly informed with respect to the mode of entertaining, common in families like his at the period to which I now allude. Company was rarely invited to dinner. I remember only two or three occasions on which dinner parties took place in my father's house. Several of the neighbours were invited to an entertainment of this kind after killing the *mart*,* which was salted for winter provision, as no fresh meat was found at that season in the market. It was called the *spare-rib* dinner, because the principal dish on the table consisted of a roast of a portion of the *mart*, which went by that name. Another formal dinner also took place in every family on one of the holidays about the beginning or end of the year. Uninvited visits

* "Mart, marte, mairt, a cow or ox fattened, killed, and salted for winter provision."—Jameson's *Scottish Dictionary*.

often occurred, and were always received with pleasure. In my father's house, the entertainments given on such occasions were not expensive or ostentatious, but good and substantial. The usual beverage was strong ale, with a small glass of brandy; and at more formal dinners—often indeed—claret punch. Both rum and whisky were beginning to be introduced; but I remember my father protested against this practice as an innovation; and when any of his visitors preferred punch, he had to send to the grocer's for a single bottle of rum.

The south of Scotland (Dumfries, Peebles, and Roxburghshire), was at that time supplied with ample store of claret and brandy from the Isle of Man. The claret, I have heard, cost not above 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d. per bottle; the brandy, £1 per anchor, or 6d. per bottle. The strong ale, excellent in quality, was brewed at home, and cost about 2d. per bottle; the malt tax being moderate, and no excise upon home brewing.

Among my father's intimate friends was the celebrated Scottish poet, Allan Ramsay,* of whom I have often heard him speak. An opinion obtained

* Born 1686, died 1757.

currency in literary circles a few years ago, that Allan Ramsay was not the author of the "Gentle Shepherd." My father never heard the subject mentioned without indignation. I believe he had himself seen the poem in manuscript. He used to say that the corrections suggested by Allan's friends, William Hamilton of Gilbertfield, and Sir William Bennet—one or other of whom was suspected of being the real author—were few, and related chiefly to the form or artificial arrangement of the drama.

As a proof of his great readiness in composition, I have heard my father mention that Ramsay's Epistle to Mr. Somerville,* the author of "The Chase," was written while he was himself sitting with him, and in a very short time. This poem, which, besides being thus written impromptu, possesses certainly hardly any other merit, for it is one of Allan's poorest performances, has a rather curious history connected with it, not unworthy, perhaps, of being preserved. William Somerville

* The verses referred to are entitled "Answer to an Epistle from W. Somerville, Esq., of Warwickshire," (Ramsay's *Poems*, vol. ii., p. 273, ed. 1728). There is an "Epistle to Mr. Somerville" at p. 268 of the same volume, which was written on another occasion, and is a much finer poem.—Ed.

(the poet) had conceived a clannish attachment to Lord Somerville, and though no connection between the families could be traced of a more modern date than the Conquest,* had given Lord Somerville some ground to expect being made his heir. The succession of his lordship, at all events, to the poet's Gloucestershire estate† was already a settled point. In these circumstances, Allan Ramsay, who was known to be in the habit of corresponding with Mr. Somerville, was asked to notify to him the interesting intelligence of the birth of Lord Somerville's eldest son and heir, in the form of a poetical epistle; and the poem in question was accordingly written. This poem afterwards became important evidence in a question of law involving considerable interests. When the boy whose birth had been thus announced,

* "You both from one great lineage spring,
Both from De Somervile, who came
With William, England's conquering king,
To win fair plains and lasting fame,

"Whichnour he left to 's eldest son;
That first-born son you represent:
His second came to Caledon,
From whom our Somer'le takes descent."

Allan Ramsay's Epistle to Mr. Somerville.—Ed.

† Somerville-Aston.

and who became the fourteenth Lord Somerville, died in 1765, the descendants of his mother by a previous marriage claimed a share of his personal estate, according to the law of England, alleging that his lordship was to be considered an Englishman, and not a Scotchman; and the place of his birth was held to be a material circumstance for establishing the fact in dispute. No record of the birth, however, had been inserted in the parish register, nor, according to a general custom in Scotland, in the family Bible. Ramsay's verses supplied the necessary proof, and the rather that, as I happened to be the means of ascertaining, they were inserted in the first edition of the poems, published in 1728, a year before the birth of Hugh Somerville, the second son, and although they do not so designate him, were necessarily alone applicable to the heir. I procured, with some difficulty, a copy of the edition of 1728, and was informed by Sir James Burgess, to whom I forwarded it in London, that its production had the principal weight in persuading Lord Somerville's English relations to desist from the farther prosecution of their claim.*

* The case is a celebrated one. See 5 Vesey jun., p. 749. In the same edition of Ramsay's poems (vol. ii., p. 46), there occurs an elegy on James Lord Carnegie, only son of the forfeited Earl of South-

The death of my father affected me with the most poignant sorrow. His fond affection for me, regret for having been so much withdrawn from the benefit and delight of his society, and the disappointment of the sweet intercourse I had anticipated on my return from college, engrossed all my thoughts during the sad visit I paid to Hawick on the occasion of the funeral, and for long afterwards. At the close of the session 1757, I returned,* for the last time, to the manse, which was

esk, "who died 7th of January 1722, the eighth year of his age." In the Southesk peerage cause it was necessary, in support of Sir James Carnegie's claim, to prove that this Lord Carnegie had died without issue; and Ramsay's elegy, though afterwards supported by other proof, was for some time the only evidence for the claimant on this part of the case.—Ed.

* An account of his "expenses coming out of town with a servant and two horses," on this occasion, may be transcribed from the author's memorandum-book for 1757, as illustrating the cost of travelling at that period :—

"To the horses	2s.
To the servant	1s.
To corn at Hougate	8d.
To rolls	1d.
To the turnpike	2d.
(All night at Traquair.)	
To corn	1s.
To straw	6d.
To eating	1s. 5d.
To corn (at Hawick)	1s."

—Ed.

still occupied by my sisters. Our lonely condition, and narrow means, with the numberless mementos of our recent calamity, contrasted with the social habits, the gaiety, and the indulgences which had endeared the spot of our residence, rendered that summer the darkest period of my past life. Even my studies went on heavily. My sisters and I removed, in November, to Edinburgh, as the most convenient situation for carrying on my education. Miss Colville,* our mother's cousin, gave us a house rent free, near the Netherbow Port.† Our circumstances required rigid economy.

Among other friends to whose hospitality and kindness I was particularly indebted at this period of my residence in Edinburgh, were Mrs. Geddes of Kirkurd, the aunt of Lady Elliot, who was then

* Miss Colville possessed a small property called Sunberry, on the Water of Leith, opposite the Dean. She was a lady of some fortune, which, I had reason to believe, she intended that I should inherit—an arrangement interfered with by her marriage, late in life, to Mr. Loch, W.S.

† The Netherbow-port united the city wall from St. Mary Wynd to Leith Wynd, separating the High Street from the Canongate. This fine gateway (of which a view is given by Arnot) was built in the year 1606, and was the principal entry to the city. It was demolished in 1764.—See Arnot's *History of Edinburgh*, p. 238.—Ed.

reckoned as my relation;* Lord Somerville, with others of my father's friends; and Mr. Davidson, the father of the late Mr. Davidson of Stewartfield.†

At the house of Mr. Davidson, who had retired from the business of a bookseller with an ample fortune, I was first introduced to the acquaintance of Nathaniel Davidson, for some years the most intimate of my friends in Edinburgh. He afterwards became secretary to Wortley Montagu, with whom he visited Grand Cairo and Constantinople, and accompanied the caravan from the former city to Mecca, through the desert of Arabia. Upon his return to Europe he was appointed consul at Nice, afterwards at Algiers, in both which places he resided for several years. He intended to publish‡ an account of his travels, which would have

* In the course of my long life, I never have known a person more kind-hearted than Mrs. Geddes. She was uncommonly cheerful in conversation, with a talent for wit.

† Mr. John Davidson of Stewartfield, near Jedburgh (now Hartrigg, the seat of Lord Campbell), was a Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, and Crown-agent. He is honourably mentioned by Principal Robertson, in the preface to the *History of Scotland*.—Ed.

‡ Mr. Davidson's travels have been published since the above was written. I suspect, however, that the work contains only a small part of his MSS. He died in 1780.

been a valuable contribution to literature. He was discouraged, however, by the loss of his drawings, and by the penurious offer of the booksellers, which he thought unequal to the time and labour he had spent in the composition of the work. The letters I received from Consul Davidson are full of good humour, amusing information, as well as expressions of the most constant affection. I had the good fortune to meet with him at London, as often as I happened to be there; and, when he visited his friends at Alnwick, we always contrived to spend a few days together, in the house of his elder brother, Dr. Davidson, and at the manse in Jedburgh. Among the pleasantest hours of my life, both in youth and old age, I reckon those which passed in the company of Nathaniel Davidson. His polite manners, his vivacity, his intimate acquaintance with foreign customs and manners, and his store of curious anecdotes relating to the incidents of his travels, always made the conversation of Consul Davidson attractive to his friends.

At this time, and till I was licensed as a preacher, theology was my chief study. In the course of my reading, I do not think that any of

the books that treat of the evidences of natural and revealed religion were omitted. Of all such works, however, I consider myself to have profited most by Butler's Analogy, for strengthening my understanding, satisfying my doubts, and suggesting the soundest rules, and most becoming temper, for the investigation of truth.

The first year after my entrance to the Divinity Hall I became a communicant. I usually attended Lady Yester's Church, but, as Miss Colville had a seat in the New Greyfriars', where my sisters accompanied her, there appeared a particular suitableness in associating with my relations on that solemn occasion.* The pleasant sensations which I experienced on the first performance of this duty have often since recurred to my remembrance, and made me ashamed of a comparative coldness and indifference, arising from familiarity and advancing years, though I trust that the obligations and comfort of those early devout impressions will never be effaced from my mind.

* This was in the end of 1759, at which time the minister of the New Greyfriars' Church was the eminent Dr. John Erskine. He had been appointed in the autumn of 1758 to that charge, which he held for nine years.—Ed.

Mr. Burges,* married to Lord Somerville's eldest daughter, having retired from military service, was appointed Commissioner of the Excise in Scotland, and came to Somerville House,† with his wife and two children, in the summer 1759. Being often a visitor at Somerville House, I obtained his good opinion; and he made me the offer of being tutor to his son. This proposal met with the approbation of Lord Somerville, and all his family. I had laid my account with pursuing the laborious office of a tutor, but had declined several offers already made to me in that capacity, because inadequate to my expectations. My attachment to the family of Lord Somerville, the amiable character of Mr. Burges, and the flattering consideration of holding a higher station than that of a mercenary tutor, and being acknowledged and treated as a relation of the family, made me appreciate this event as the most desirable that could have happened at my

* George Burges, Esq. of Greslee, Berkshire (born 1723). Having entered the army, he was for some time aide-de-camp to General Bland, Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, and afterwards accompanied him as military secretary to Gibraltar. He married the Hon. Anne Wichnour Somerville in 1748, and was a commissioner of excise in Scotland from 1761 to 1768.—Ed.

† At Drum, near Edinburgh.—Ed.

age, and in my circumstances. Nor were the views and expectations which I then cherished disappointed. My pupil James, now Sir James Burges,* then in his eighth year, discovered a quickness of apprehension, a strength of memory, and a celerity in making himself master of the lessons prescribed to him, which I had never seen in any boy before. In the progress of his education, I was often secretly ashamed to think how little I had the advantage as a scholar. He was not himself ignorant of the uncommon precocity of his genius.

In the end of the year 1759, I became a member of the Theological Society, and afterwards (1761) of the Belles Lettres Society. To my attendance on these societies, more than to

* James Bland Burges, afterwards Member of Parliament for Helstone, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Knight Marshall of the Household, with remainder to his eldest son. He was created a baronet in 1795, and latterly took the name of Lamb in place of Burges. He married—1st, Elizabeth Noel, daughter of Viscount Wentworth; 2d, Anne, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Montolieu; and 3d, Lady Margaret Lindsay, daughter of the Earl of Balcarres. His eldest son (by his second wife) married Lady Montgomerie, mother of the present Earl of Eglinton and Winton.

Sir James Burges was the author of *The Birth and Triumph of Love*; *Richard I., an Epic Poem*; *The Exodiad*; *Riches, a drama* (in conjunction with Richard Cumberland); and of several political pamphlets.—Ed.

any branch of reading or study, I impute any progress I have made in literature, in composition, and in solid intellectual improvement. I thus acquired, especially, some facility and correctness of expression, and, what I deem of still greater importance, an estimation and love of truth. A rule to which I invariably adhered, was to speak only on such subjects as I believed to be within the compass of my understanding, and to embrace and defend that side of the question which accorded with my genuine sentiments, and appeared to be supported by the most solid arguments. My exertions in both these societies also contributed in various respects to my advantage, by procuring me the esteem of several of my fellow-students. Most of the members of the Belles Lettres Society were the sons of gentlemen of high rank, the greater number of them students of law, and I have, in the after course of my life, reaped the benefit of their favourable opinion and early attachment. In the Belles Lettres Society, Mr. Blair* and Mr. Dundas† were esteemed the best speakers, and gave early proofs of those

* Robert Blair, afterwards Lord President (born 1741, died 1811).

† Henry Dundas, afterwards first Viscount Melville (born 1739, died 1811).

splendid oratorical powers which afterwards raised them to pre-eminent prosperity and honour. Mr. Blair's speeches were not only brilliant, but full of sound argument, and strictly confined to the subject under discussion. Mr. Dundas excelled chiefly in readiness and fluency of elocution, but he reasoned feebly, and often digressed from the question. In discussions of a political nature, he always professed an enthusiastic attachment to Whig principles. The eminence which Mr. Dundas afterwards attained as a statesman and able debater surpassed the expectations I had formed from his appearances in the Belles Lettres Society and in the General Assembly, where he also took a keen part in the discussion of business.* A list

* Lord Kames early predicted his future distinction. I recollect spending an evening with Lord Kames, when he was on circuit duty, soon after I came to reside at Jedburgh in 1773. Mr. Charters, my father-in-law, made one of his guests; and, as he was Lord Kames' contemporary, and had been on familiar terms with him from their early days, the conversation turned upon those of their acquaintance who had become most eminent for their abilities and public services; and the names of Mr. Oswald of Dunnikier, and Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, were mentioned among the foremost of this description. Lord Kames said:—"I will venture to add another name. Harry Dundas possesses all the qualities of an able statesman—quickness of apprehension, a comprehensive understanding, fluency of language, with public spirit; and will in a short time do honour to his country, by making as brilliant a figure as any of our

of the members, and the minutes of the Society, were, a few years ago, deposited in the Advocates' Library* by Lord Buchan, who was one of our number, and whose thirst of knowledge and assiduous application at that time, gave promising hopes of future eminence in the literary and political world.†

The Theological Society was not only a school of mental improvement, but a nursery of brotherly love and kind affections. In the two first years of this Society, while limited to a smaller number, a general good-will and attachment united the whole body, and many intimate and lasting friendships were formed among its individual members. My warm attachment to James Dickson,‡ Walter

Scottish representatives have done since the union of the two kingdoms." Mr. Dundas had, shortly before this, entered the House of Commons, and had just commenced his public career.

* The volume of Minutes in the Advocates' Library embraces the period from 12th January 1759, when the Society was instituted, to 21st March 1760. Among the names of honorary members mentioned as occasionally present at the meetings, are Principal Robertson, Dr. Carlyle, David Hume, John Home, Dr. Adam Ferguson, and Dr. Hugh Blair.—Ed.

† Lord Buchan's vanity overpowered his judgment, and disappointed the expectations which had been excited by the brilliancy of his talents, and his application to literature in early life. [This was David Stuart, eleventh Earl of Buchan (born 1742, died 1829).]

‡ Mr. Dickson entered into business as a bookseller in Edinburgh.

Young, Andrew Smith, John Robertson, afterwards minister of Kilmarnock, John Martin,* John Cook, John Gowdie, William Lothian,† and John Warden,‡ originated from our fellowship in the Theological Society, and continued on my part, and I hope on theirs, unabated during their lives; for, while I am writing this in October 1813, John Cook, Professor of Moral Philosophy in St. Andrews, and Dr. Young, minister of Erskine,§ and perhaps not above six or eight more, are the only surviving members of the Theological Society, which, before its dissolution in 1764, had increased to a list of fifty or sixty names.

The darkest side of the history of this Society,

* He became minister, first of Merton, and then of Spot, and died in 1793.

† William Lothian, D.D., first minister of the Canongate, Edinburgh, and author of a *History of the Netherlands* (Lond. 1780). He died in 1783, in the forty-third year of his age.—Ed.

‡ Afterwards Dr. John Macfarlane (having changed his name for an estate), second minister of the Canongate. Sir H. Moncreiff says (*Life of Erskine*), that "he died regretted by the whole community of Edinburgh, who lost in him one of its most useful and valuable members."—Ed.

§ Dr. Young died in 1814, Professor Cook in 1815. [The latter was the father of the late Dr. George Cook, the author of Histories of the Reformation and of the Church of Scotland, and long the leader of the Moderate party in the General Assembly.—Ed.]

which diminished, perhaps counterbalanced the advantages derived from it, I will not conceal. Our tavern adjournments, which succeeded our weekly meetings in the College, were the cause of expense, and sometimes of excess and irregularity, unsuitable to our circumstances and professional views. I can never forget the exquisite pleasure I derived from these social meetings—the unrestrained utterance of every thought—the harmless sallies of wit in which we indulged—the profitable conversation introduced, and enlivened with mirth and good humour—the affection with which my heart glowed towards the partners of my pleasure—the generous purposes excited, and often productive of friendly actions. But again, when I reflect on the baneful habits by which some of the worthiest of my earliest contemporaries have been enthralled, and which I have too much reason to think germinated in the fascinating indulgences I have described, and reflect by what a narrow escape my own health and character have been maintained, ascribable chiefly to the fortunate incidents of after retirement, and domestic connections, I recognise a substantial moral amendment in that sobriety and

temperance now practised by persons of every age and rank, and am thankful that the rising generation, in whom I am interested, are exempted from temptations which have sometimes blighted the fairest blossoms of genius and virtue.

As I propose, in this work, to record the names of the many distinguished persons whom I had access to know, I shall close this chapter with a short account of Provost Drummond,* who stood in the first rank of public characters in the metropolis, long before, and during the period of my residence there.

George Drummond was descended from the noble family of Perth, forfeited by the adherence of its chief to the fortune of King James, in 1689. The dignity of his person in advanced age, when I knew him, commanded at first sight respect and reverence, insomuch that, if a stranger had been introduced to any meeting of the inhabitants of Edinburgh for the consideration of business of the most important nature, his eye would have immediately selected Mr. Drummond as the fittest person to take the lead in council. Every prepos-

* See also before, p. 22. A sketch of the life of Mr. Drummond will be found in Chambers' *Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*.—Ed.

session in his favour was confirmed upon farther acquaintance, by the politeness of his manners, and the affability of his conversation. I never heard what was Provost Drummond's professional destination in early life. While a young man, he was distinguished by his talents as an accomptant, and in his nineteenth year (1705) he had the honour to be employed by the Commissioners for the Union, in the investigation of the public accounts. He afterwards held appointments in the Board of Customs, and in the Excise. The most marked feature in Mr. Drummond's character was public spirit. The acknowledged eminence of his business talents and his popular manners, early recommended him to his fellow-citizens as the most worthy person to be intrusted with the management of their common interests. In the year 1725 he was preferred to the first station in the Town Council of Edinburgh, to which he was often re-elected before the year 1766, when he was gathered to his fathers, rich in reputation and good works. To his instigation and labours, the town of Edinburgh, and the country at large, are indebted for the institution of the Royal Infirmary, the erection of the Royal Exchange,

and a number of other schemes for the improvement of the city. He was chiefly instrumental, as has been already mentioned, in promoting the efficiency and reputation of the University. The extension and reform of the Post Office may also be particularized as one of his public services. Nor did the operation of his patriotic efforts terminate with his life. I happened one day, when in his company at Dr. Jardine's,* his son-in-law, in the uppermost storey of the house in the north corner of the Exchange, to be standing at a window looking out to the opposite side of the North Loch, then called Barefoot's Parks, in which there was not a single house to be seen, "Look at these fields," said Provost Drummond; "you, Mr. Somerville, are a young man, and may probably live, though I will not, to see all these fields covered with houses, forming a splendid and magnificent city. To the accomplishment of this, nothing more is necessary than draining the North Loch, and providing a proper access from the old town. I have never lost sight of this object since the year 1725, when I was first elected provost. I have met with much opposition, and encountered

* Rev. John Jardine, D.D., minister of the Tron Church, Edinburgh.

many difficulties, which have retarded success,* but I believe that they are at last surmounted, and that this great work will be soon carried into effect.". The Town Council were then taking in plans and estimates for building the North Bridge, and the North Loch was in progress of being drained.

* The extension of the royalty of the city of Edinburgh, essential to the accomplishment of Provost Drummond's plan of building the North Bridge, and the consequent additions to the city, was long retarded by the opposition of his political antagonists, who called themselves the patriotic party, and had the populace, and a great number of respectable citizens on their side.

CHAPTER II.

1759-1764.

I CONTINUED in Mr. Burges' family from the end of the year 1759 till my settlement at Minto, with an interval of sixteen months, when Mr. Burges was absent from Edinburgh, on account of the state of his health. He resided the greater part of that time at Tunbridge, and imputed his complete recovery to the efficacy of the waters there.

I spent most of the summer 1760 at Markinch manse, with the minister, Mr. Pinkerton, who, owing to some kindness shewn him by my father in his youth, treated me with paternal affection. During my stay at Markinch, I enjoyed much pleasant intercourse in the neighbouring families of Balbirnie, Brunton, and Carieston, with young persons of both sexes of my own age. Miss

Balfour, now Mrs. Wardlaw, was a great beauty, and the most frank and cheerful young lady I had before seen. After my return to Edinburgh, I lodged, during the winter, in the same room with Patrick Carfrae (now minister of Dunbar). During the summer months Samuel Charters* became my fellow-lodger. He had, previously to this time, studied at the University of Glasgow. A reciprocal esteem and attachment, originating chiefly in our literary predilections, quickened rapidly into the most cordial friendship, which, throughout life, has been fruitful of solid improvement and much pleasure to both of us.

I often reflect on this period as the pleasantest, no less than the most profitable, of my early life. I had leisure to pursue my studies without interruption; and being of a social disposition, I enjoyed much of the company of friends of my own

* Samuel Charters, D.D., minister of Wilton, and author of several tracts which have been frequently reprinted, particularly *A Sermon on Alms*, and a *Discourse on the Duty of making a Testament*. An elaborate review of two volumes of his *Sermons*, by Dr. Chalmers, will be found in the *Christian Instructor* for 1811, and in *Chalmers' Works*, vol. xii., p. 564. He was born at Inverkeithing in 1742, and died in 1825. A brief memoir of Dr. Charters is contained in a sermon preached and published on the occasion of his death by the author of the present *Memoirs*, then himself in his eighty-fifth year.—Ed.

age and station. If the time of my liberty had been prolonged, it is more than probable that the love of pleasure might have relaxed my application to study; for I was, perhaps to a culpable degree, fond of convivial meetings, and my company began to be courted by many young men of a similar disposition, who were not under the restraints which my principles, pecuniary circumstances, and professional views imposed upon me.

There was not any period in the course of the last century, when the temper and spirit of the British nation were more in unison, and when persons of every rank were more predisposed for mirth and festivity, than in the later years of George II. The general gloom and despondency diffused by the disgraceful events which happened at the commencement of the war with France (1756), were not only dispelled by the vigorous administration of Mr. Pitt, and by a series of the most brilliant exploits that ever have been recorded in the annals of Britain, but gave place to pride and exultation. These feelings were heightened by the accession of our present gracious sovereign.* The circumstance of his being

* George III. Succeeded to the crown October 25, 1760.

a native of Britain, his excellent character, and the retrieved glory of the nation, all combined to distinguish that event as the consummation of national honour and felicity. Transports of loyalty burst forth among all descriptions of men, and in every quarter of the British dominions. Even the Jacobites renounced their antipathy to the house of Hanover, and wished to be acknowledged as good subjects. At no former period had all the inhabitants of Great Britain and her colonies been more sincerely and cordially cemented by loyalty, contentment, and the love of their country and sovereign, than at the accession of George the Third. But these pleasing circumstances were of short duration.

Many months had not elapsed before the demon of discord and the malignant spirit of faction began to agitate and embroil the British nation. Every engine was employed to disturb the public tranquillity, and to alienate from their prince the affections of an attached people. The sudden promotion of Lord Bute to the highest offices of trust and power, united men of opposite principles and interests in a conspiracy against the court and government. The most profligate persons were patronised by the leaders of opposition,

because they exceeded all the bounds of decency, not only in arraigning the measures of administration, but in calumniating the characters of those who were most dear to the sovereign. The filial and fraternal kindness of the Prince of Wales,* from his earliest days, had attracted the praise of all the domestics and visitors at Leicester House, and was held as a pleasing presage of that paternal tenderness which softens and adorns sovereign authority. The most scandalous imputations were now set afloat by the hirelings of a licentious faction, to disparage the virtues, and to wound the feelings of the king, by tarnishing the character of his beloved parent, and ascribing his Majesty's partiality for Lord Bute to the most base and unworthy motives.

Because Lord Bute was a Scotsman, slanderous and inflammatory libels against his country daily issued from the press, in order to rouse the jealousy of his Majesty's English subjects, and to vilify and traduce the Scottish nation. The terms of the peace,† as accomplished by Lord Bute, while they

* Prince Frederick Louis, son of George II. and father of George III., who died in 1751.

† The Peace of Paris, concluded Feb. 10, 1763.

afforded a fair scope for debate, and called forth all the eloquence of his opponents, produced unfavourable impressions upon many unconnected with party, and were made the ground of impeaching his political wisdom, and the patriotism of his associates in the ministry.

With respect to the merits of the peace, I shall only remark—(1.) That in the latter years of the war, the success of the British arms had been so unprecedented, that it was perhaps impracticable to obtain a peace on any terms adequate to popular expectations; (2.) That, notwithstanding the glare of prosperity which dazzled the multitude, it was obvious from the depression of manufactures and commerce, and the exhausted state of the finances, that permanent and irremediable disasters would have been the consequence of continuing the war; and (3.) That, under these impressions, his Majesty, aware of the overbearing disposition of Mr. Pitt, and despairing of a peace under his administration, called Lord Bute to the helm of government, for the sole purpose of bringing about that desirable event. I am further authorized, from Lord Bute's private letters (of which I obtained copies from Lord Macartney in

the year 1800), to assert that Lord Bute accepted the office of First Lord of the Treasury upon the express condition and promise of his Majesty's permission to resign it, and to withdraw from all public business, as soon as peace was attained.* The fact I have now stated I consider important; for many persons who had no good will to the party in opposition, censured Lord Bute's resignation as a dastardly and ill-timed desertion of his sovereign in the hour of his perplexity, and as a weak concession to the violence of an unprincipled faction.

* *e.g.*—"I take the liberty of observing to your Grace, that when the Duke of Newcastle went out, and I found myself under a necessity to accept my present situation, I did it with the utmost reluctance, and nothing but the king's safety and independency could have made me acquiesce in a way of life so opposite to every feeling; nor did I kiss the king's hand till I had received his solemn promise to be permitted to go out when peace was once attained. Thanks to a kind providence and your Grace's abilities, that day is now come; and well it is so, for, independent of other considerations, the state of my health is such—and any constant attention to business is declared to be fatal to me—that I find myself under the unpleasant necessity of putting my much-loved sovereign in mind of his promise. I have done so; and, after scenes I can never forget, his tenderness to me has got the better of his partiality to my poor endeavours to serve him, and he approves of my determination.—*Letter from Lord Bute to the Duke of Bedford.* London, April 2, 1763. There are similar expressions in letters of nearly the same date to the Chancellor, Charles Townshend, and the Earl of Leitchfield.

In the summer of 1761, Mr. Sheridan, the father of the late celebrated Richard Brinsley Sheridan, made a visit to Edinburgh, and delivered a course of lectures on elocution—an event which gave a new direction to the pursuits of students in all the different branches of literature. He was patronized by the professors in the College, by several of the clergy, by the most eminent among the gentlemen at the bar, by the judges of the Court of Session, and by all who at that time were the leaders of public taste. His lectures were attended by ladies and gentlemen of the highest position, as well as by most of the students then in town, all of whom were charmed with his instructive criticisms, and still more with the select readings from the English classics which followed every lecture. A rage for the study of elocution became universal, as if it were the master-excellence in every profession. Among other results of Mr. Sheridan's visit, a society, consisting of literary men, was formed, for the purpose of concerting measures for the instruction of the young in this hitherto neglected, but, as was now supposed, primary branch of education; and the lecturer was himself commissioned to send a

teacher of reading and pronunciation, who should, besides the fees of his scholars, receive a fixed salary from the society. Since this time, correct pronunciation and elegant reading have, in Edinburgh, been reckoned indispensable acquirements for people of fashion and for public speakers, and perhaps have come to be overrated, particularly in pulpit oratory, to the neglect of attainments of a more important nature.

During my residence in Edinburgh and its vicinity, the pulpits were filled with a great proportion of able preachers. On the excellence of Dr. Blair's* sermons, which have now been long in the hands of the public, I need not enlarge. His manner of delivery was not equal to the matter of his discourses. It was stiff, formal, and not altogether free from affectation. I may here notice that the sermons of Dr. Blair appear to me occasionally liable to censure from overstraining, or giving too high a colouring to the present pleasures

* Hugh Blair, D.D., born 1718, died 1800. This distinguished preacher was, at the time above referred to, one of the ministers of the High Church, and had also begun to deliver, with the approbation of the University of Edinburgh, his well-known lectures on rhetoric. A professorship of Rhetoric was created for him two or three years afterwards, namely in 1762.—Ed.

and rewards of a religious and virtuous life. He seems, in particular, to maintain that peace and joy, on the near approach of death, invariably accompany genuine piety, and are essential criterions of the sincerity of a religious profession. This position I consider not only untrue, but of pernicious tendency, and discouraging to good men, whose faith not unfrequently fails them at the awful crisis of death. Fact and experience supersede any discussion of this subject, founded on physical causes. In the course of my attendance on dying persons, I have often witnessed the consolations of Christian faith; but I have seen the pious and the virtuous dejected, disconsolate, appalled, and persons of an opposite character composed, indifferent, intrepid, on the immediate approach of death.

Dr. Dick,* minister of the College Church, a man otherwise of very great ability, possessed every attribute of a good preacher. His sermons were rich in sentiment, often tender and pathetic, and delivered with much dignity and gracefulness, so as at once to interest and delight his hearers, and to leave a solemn and abiding impression on

* He died in 1782, at the age of sixty-one.

their hearts. But his health was broken, his spirits depressed, and his stock of discourses scanty.

Mr. Walker,* in the High Church, compressed and softened the Calvinistical doctrines, in simple Addisonian language, pronounced with a vivacity, harmony, and sweetness of tone, that charmed every ear; his sermons being chiefly liable to censure on account of a sameness of thought.

Dr. Wallace, minister of the New North Church, and one of the deans of the Chapel Royal, had more originality of mind than any minister in Edinburgh. He was called by his contemporaries "the philosopher," because he was particularly fond of philological and metaphysical studies. He excelled in giving a rational explanation of difficult texts of Scripture, and throwing light on obscure subjects. Dr. Wallace was the author of several philosophical and political tracts, which discovered depth of thought and sound judgment. One of them, if I rightly recollect, treats of population and the numerous inhabitants of Europe under the Roman empire. Some of the sentiments contained in Malthus' admired work are forestalled

* Born 1716, died 1783.

by Dr. Wallace in the pamphlets to which I refer.*

Dr. Wishart† was distinguished, among those ministers who had been educated at the same period, for his accurate composition, and the practical character of his discourses. His meek apostolic countenance, the mildness of his address, the perspicuity and elegance of his expression, and the moral tendency of his teaching, rendered him acceptable as a preacher to persons of cultivated taste. He was especially a favourite with those of his hearers who were partial to the Arminian system.

In many respects the preaching of Dr. Drysdale‡ was not less masterly than original. He had

* The work to which the author alludes is entitled, *A Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind in Ancient and Modern Times*, and was published in 1752. For a statement of the obligations of Malthus to this work, see Mr. Burton's *Life of David Hume*, vol. i. p. 364, note. Among the other publications of Dr. Wallace, are his *Characteristics of the Present State of Great Britain* (1758), and *Various Prospects of Mankind, Nature and Providence* (1761). He was born January 7, 1697, and died July 29, 1771.—Ed.

† George Wishart, D.D., minister of the Tron Church, principal clerk of the General Assembly, and one of the deans of the Chapel Royal. He died in the year 1785, aged eighty-three.—Ed.

‡ Afterwards Dr. Wishart's colleague in the Tron Church, and his colleague and successor in the clerkship of the Assembly. He was also

made the stoical philosophy the special object of his study, and it was his aim to incorporate its austere dogmas with the doctrines and precepts of the gospel. His language was copious, but at the same time nervous; his periods harmonious, and his delivery forcible and emphatic.

Dr. Robertson, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and minister of the Old Greyfriars' Church, excelled in lecturing, or explaining and illustrating large passages of Scripture, particularly such as were narrative and historical, and in a suitable application of them to human life and characters. His sermons were always sensible and useful, and the more easily followed on account of the different heads or articles being arranged with logical precision. He never attempted to address the passions.

To Dr. Erskine,* Dr. Robertson's colleague in

long the chief coadjutor of Principal Robertson in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs.—Ed.

* Dr. Erskine was born about the year 1721, and was the son of Mr. Erskine of Cardross, Professor of Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh, and the author of Erskine's *Institutes*. He died in January 1803. The account of his life and writings by Sir H. Moncreiff, already referred to, besides its interest as a biography, is well known to be a work of the highest authority in relation to the religious and ecclesiastical history of Scotland during the last century. It is hardly necessary to add that Sir

the Old Greyfriars', as a practical and useful preacher, I have no hesitation in assigning the preference, not only to his contemporaries, but almost to any preacher I ever heard. Although attached to the orthodox system, the tenor of his sermons was invariably practical. Dr. Erskine's aspect was austere, his pronunciation harsh and monotonous, his composition defective in elegance and correctness; but the solidity of his matter, the weight of his arguments, the perspicuity of his expression, the fervour and earnestness of his address, much more than atoned for these minor imperfections.

There were other preachers of celebrity, but I have only mentioned those whom I had an opportunity of hearing.

Whether the style of pulpit oratory be now better or worse than it was fifty years ago, no doubt, at least, can exist with respect to the rapid and substantial improvement which had been progressive for the thirty years preceding the last-

Walter Scott, in early life, attended the Greyfriars' Church, and from personal recollection has given a vivid description of the manner and appearance of Dr. Erskine in the pulpit, as well as of the style of his eloquence, in an often-quoted passage in *Guy Mannering*, chap. 37.—Ed.

mentioned period. The late truly candid and judicious Professor Hamilton, to whom I was indebted for much valuable information, in the course of conversation on this subject, told me that among the many changes for the better he had witnessed during the continuance of his long life, he considered that which had taken place with respect to the education and acquirements of the candidates for the office of the ministry, and the strain and composition of the discourses delivered in the pulpit, one of the most notable and important; and he accounted for it in the following manner:—After the Revolution, when the Presbyterian form of religion was re-established in 1692, many of the churches being vacated by the Episcopalian incumbents, who declined taking the oath to King William, or were averse to the Presbyterian government, it became necessary to supply their places with a succession of candidates who had been only half educated, and superficially accomplished, and were recommended chiefly by a fanatical zeal for the Presbyterian establishment in opposition to Episcopacy, the supreme object of popular dread and hatred. The pernicious effects of the intrusion of persons of this

description was palpable for the first twenty years of the last century, after which period the Church was again supplied with ministers who had enjoyed the advantage of a regular and learned education. As a confirmation of this fact, the Professor added, that his father,* who filled the Divinity Chair in the University of Edinburgh until, I think, about the year 1731, had been in the use of recommending to his students, at the conclusion of their course, to maintain a tender and charitable respect towards their fathers in the church, who had not enjoyed the means of acquiring the literature and liberality of sentiment so amply provided in the more happy times in which their own lot had been cast.

To these observations, I may add that, though the respectability of the clerical character was redeemed by their acquirements at the era I have mentioned, yet a long interval succeeded before the narrow prejudices were eradicated, which had been

* Mr. William Hamilton, afterwards Principal (see *supra*, p. 17, note). It was this professor whose judicious criticism of one of the probationary exercises of Thomson the poet, when the latter was a student of divinity at Edinburgh in 1724 or 1725, led him to abandon his original intention of studying for the Church, as narrated in all the memoirs of the author of *The Seasons*.—Ed.

planted in the minds of the people by the illiterate though well-meaning clergy of the age which preceded it. An abhorrence of Episcopacy, not less than of Popery, predominated in the hearts of the great body of the people in Scotland, and rendered them jealous of every expression of lenity, and of every measure of tolerance towards their heretical fellow-citizens during the reigns of King William and Queen Anne. Parents instilled the same principles and temper into the minds of their children, insomuch that, within the time of my remembrance, not only the generality of the lower ranks, but many persons of better education, who were disposed seriously, and acted conscientiously, considered religious communion with the adherents of Episcopacy unwarrantable and dangerous, and condemned the liberal sentiments which began to find favour with some of the more enlightened clergy as an heretical innovation, and a breach of the sacred trust committed to the Church.

It is a curious fact, which has not yet been marked in any publication with the notice it deserves, that the extirpation of these narrow prejudices so prevalent among the Presbyterians

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in Scotland, and the introduction, and the more rapid progress of a catholic spirit, were promoted in a great degree by the conversation and preaching of the celebrated George Whitefield.*

While a zeal for the standard doctrines of the Church of Scotland, which he held to be fundamental in the faith of a Christian, went far to conciliate the favour of its members, vivacity of imagination, brilliant description, a store of anecdotes, dignified by solemnity of manner and elegance of diction, rendered his pulpit appearances universally attractive. The force of his eloquence overpowered every passion, and left a deep impression upon the heart. The prejudices of all classes of his hearers yielded to astonishment and delight. The anti-episcopalian zealots forgot that this admired preacher had received holy orders from the hands of a Prelate, and had subscribed to the Articles of the Church of England. The consciousness of their hearts being made better, was a witness within their own bosoms that the spirit of power was not withheld from the minister of a rival church. Nor was there any subject inculcated by Mr. Whitefield with greater fervour than

* Born 1714, died 1770.

a catholic spirit, and a superiority to those grovelling prejudices which centre in externals, and restrict and cramp the affection of a Christian. I have embraced, with peculiar pleasure, the opportunity of referring to a man whose name excites many pleasing recollections; and who, with all his errors and infirmities, contributed eminently, and in a wide field, to the diffusion of the knowledge of Christianity. I may add here a few of the anecdotes which were everywhere repeated about Mr. Whitefield.

When he first arrived in Scotland,* the leading clergy of the Secession, having heard of his zeal, orthodoxy, and rhetorical powers, were anxious to obtain his co-operation in support of their sect. I am not certain whether he had ever preached in any of their meeting-houses, but I have been informed that he had several conversations with them concerning their principles and views of

* In the year 1741. He preached his first sermon in the pulpit of Mr. Ralph Erskine, one of the fathers of the Secession, a body which, a few years before, had separated from the Church of Scotland, and formed themselves into a new communion under the name of the Associate Presbytery. For an account of Mr. Whitefield's proceedings during this and many subsequent visits to Scotland, see Dr. Gillies' *Life of Whitefield*, p. 61, etc.—Ed.

reformation. They wished him to understand that, in order to meet their views, it would be necessary that he should abstain from all intercourse, both in the way of personal association and religious communion with the ministers of the Established Church. "Why so?" said Mr. Whitefield. "Because," answered they, "we are God's people." "Has God," said Mr. Whitefield, "got no people but you?" This censure of the uncharitable spirit of the Seceders, not only put an end to all religious intercourse between Mr. Whitefield and them, but rendered him the object of their calumny and resentment. His having received ordination in the Church of England—his continuing the use of the common prayer-book in his chapel, at London—and his observance of all the forms and ceremonies prescribed by High-Church authority, were now brought forward as an insurmountable bar to all future connection with him; and his popularity, and the wonderful effects of his preaching, like those which happened at Cambuslang, were ascribed to diabolical influence.*

* The Associate Presbytery proceeded so far as, on the 15th of July 1742, to pass an Act appointing the 4th of August following to be

Mr. Whitefield had a lively turn for humour, which was sometimes employed, both in his conversation and public discourses, with decency and propriety, but also occasionally betrayed him into a kind of jesting which was very unbecoming. After having officiated for several mornings and evenings in the tent pulpit in the Orphan Hospital Park, at Edinburgh, he expressed his wish that the managers of the Hospital would provide him with a more accomplished precentor. Another performer was accordingly employed, who gave perfect satisfaction to Mr. Whitefield, but offended several of his graver hearers, by introducing some new airs, which they thought savoured of levity. They

observed as a Fast, chiefly because (1) "The Lord hath, in his righteous displeasure, left this Church and land to give such an open discovery of their apostacy from him, in the fond reception that Mr. George Whitefield has met with;" and (2) Because the people are so much "imposed upon by several ministers, who, notwithstanding of all the ordinary symptoms of a delusion attending the present awful work [at Cambuslang] upon the bodies and spirits of men, yet cry it up as a great work of God." This document will be found printed, *in extenso*, in the *Scots Magazine* for July 1742 (vol. iv. p. 310). For a narrative compiled from the Kirk-session minutes and other authentic sources, of what was called "the work at Cambuslang," a remarkable religious revival which is said to have occurred in that parish in the years 1741 and 1742, see the old *Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. v. pp. 266-274. An abstract of the contemporary accounts of the movement is given in the volume of the *Scots Magazine* already cited, at page 232.—Ed.

mentioned the cause of their discontent to Mr. Whitefield, complaining that these tunes too much resembled such as were in use in the playhouse, a place he never mentioned but with horror. "Why, my friends," was his answer, "should the devil be permitted to run away with all our good tunes?" One morning he awakened the curiosity of his numerous audience by the preamble with which he addressed them, before announcing his text. "I know well," said he, "that many of my hearers are fond of the theatre and ball-room, I shall this evening treat them, according to their tastes, by inviting them to a dance, after which will be performed a tragedy." (These were nearly the very words used in the Edinburgh play-bills.*) "Read Matthew, chapter xiv. verse 6," (a text which refers to Herodias dancing before Herod). The archness of this preface, while it excited the surprise of the audience, prepared them to listen with closer attention to the preacher's illustration of his subject, which consisted mostly in violent invective against dancing and plays, as inconsistent with Christian purity.

* A copy of an Edinburgh play-bill of the period, which shews the form, will be found a few pages farther on.

The solemnity and earnestness of his address were also degraded by a habit of punning, indulged upon many occasions in the midst of his most serious admonitions. Mr. Foote, the comedian, had recently made a visit to Edinburgh. His name was often introduced by Mr. Whitefield in his public discourses. For example—"However much you all admire Mr. Foote, the devil will one day make a foot-ball of him." I cannot recollect at this distance of time whether the farce of *the Minor* was published before or after Mr. Whitefield had denounced its author. In one of the scenes of that farce, Mr. Foote availed himself of his mimitic talent by a mock monitory address in the manner of Mr. Whitefield. If this happened before that event, Mr. Whitefield's censure may be imputed to resentment; if after, to the same feeling on the part of Mr. Foote.* I may here observe, by the way, that I have repeatedly heard imitations of Mr.

* The *Minor* was written in 1760; and as the play itself, which is characterized throughout by equal licentiousness and profanity, contains an obvious allusion to Mr. Whitefield's conceit above quoted, there can be no doubt as to the preacher's priority in a mode of attack not the less indefensible on his part that it provoked jests in return, in ridicule, not of himself only, but of the most sacred truths of religion.—Ed.

Whitefield in a style far superior to what was exhibited by Mr. Foote. Mr. Foote's performance was too much of a caricature.

Mr. Whitefield was distinguished not less by his readiness than by the power of his declamation. In the summer 1758 or 1759 a dreadful conflagration happened in Carrubber's Close, and half of the houses on the left hand, from the middle to the bottom of the street, were destroyed.* It was fortunately a calm day, without a breath of air, otherwise the greater part of the city must have been laid in ruins. The conflagration lasted from ten in the morning till four in the afternoon. I saw Mr. Whitefield from time to time in the midst of the

* "Between nine and ten o'clock before noon, Aug. 12 [1758], a dreadful fire broke out in Edinburgh, in a workhouse (workshop) belonging to Mr. William Reoch, cabinet-maket, Carrubbers' Close. Before any assistance could be got, the workhouse was all in a flame, which soon burst with great violencc through the roof, and communicated with the adjacent buildings. For two hours the flames threatened destruction to all around; but, by the care of the magistrates, the activity of the firemen and other workmen, the use of several engines, and the assistance of the soldiers of the city guard, and a detachment of the military from the castle, the fire was got so far confined about noon, that there was little hazard of its spreading further; and in a few hours after it was got entirely under command. . . . Four tenements, in which about fifteen families resided, are entirely burned down, and several others are considerably damaged. Happily, no lives were lost."—*Scots Magazine*, vol. xx. p. 388.

crowd of spectators. He did not leave the spot till three o'clock. At six, he entered the pulpit in the Orphan Park, and read for the subject of his discourse, Isaiah xxxiv. 14, "Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings." The aptitude and sublimity of his introduction astonished and thrilled the hearts of his hearers. Turning round and pointing to Carrubber's Close, the scene of the fire, and the nearest approach of the town to the Orphan Park,—"All of you," said he, "were witnesses of yonder scene." After a solemn pause he then proceeded to describe, in interesting and affecting detail, the more diversified and wider field of destruction which was to be witnessed by his audience hereafter, when the globe itself should be burnt up; recalling the feelings and impressions still fresh in the minds of all of them, as faint presages and anticipations of the awe and horror which they must expect to feel in that great and terrible day of the Lord.

At the period of which I am now treating, the policy and government of the Church of Scotland were in a state of greater agitation, and a more interesting object of public attention, than they have

been in the latter years of my life.* Party spirit, in the members of the ecclesiastical courts, prevailed to a degree of which few, who are now alive, can form any conception. The capital point in dispute took its rise from the Act of Parliament 1711, restoring the right of patrons, or the settlement of vacant churches by presentations, instead of election by the joint suffrages of heritors and elders, which had been adopted by the ecclesiastical courts, and confirmed by the legislature, upon the restoration of Presbytery after the Revolution. The expediency, and even the lawfulness of this mode of appointing ministers was a matter of debate as often as cases of disputed settlement were brought up by appeal from the inferior judicatories of the Church to the General Assembly. One or more of these cases came under the cognizance of every General Assembly during the first twenty years of my ministry. The moderate party, who were advocates for the Act 1711, had the weight of government and the majority of the ruling

* See the appendix to the *Life of Erskine*, and Stewart's *Life of Principal Robertson*, sect. 5. All the more remarkable cases, from 1739 to 1766, are to be found detailed in Morren's *Annals*; and the debates in the General Assembly are given with considerable fulness in the *Scots Magazine*.—Ed.

elders or lay-members of the court on their side, and uniformly supported the right of the patron, and enforced the settlement of the presentee,* when no objections could be proved against his doctrine or character. The party in opposition, called the popular party, consisting of a great proportion, and sometimes of nearly an equal number of those ministers who were members of the General Assembly, invariably voted against the ordination and induction of every presentee who had not obtained a call† by a majority of the heritors and elders of the parish to which he was presented, in conformity with the Act of the General Assembly, 1732. A considerable number of the clergy even vindicated what they called "the right of the Christian people" to choose their own ministers, and considered the call as imperfect, and an unwarrantable ground of ordination, when it was not subscribed by a majority of the heads of families and ordinary inhabitants of the parish.

The strength of argument on the side of the

* *i. e.*, The person who had received the presentation.

† What is to be strictly understood by a *call*, according to the law of the Church, has been always a matter of dispute. The general meaning of the term, however, is an invitation addressed by the parishioners or their representatives to the person to be ordained as their minister.—Ed.

moderate clergy, was the irresistible authority of a presentation. The question was not, whether patronage be the best mode of settling vacant parishes? It was the law of the land; and if the presentee was set aside without any valid and proved objection to his life and doctrine, no other candidate, even if ordained by the presbytery in consequence of the unanimous call of the parishioners, could be entitled to the temporal emoluments and provision destined for the officiating minister. Any decision, therefore, contravening the right of the presentee, would have been impotent and nugatory. And besides, it was asserted that a presentation, and the ordination of a minister founded upon it, could not be complained of as an infringement of religious liberty, or the privileges of the people. They were not compelled to submit to the superintendence of any minister of whom they could not approve in their conscience. This was a matter left entirely to their own free choice.

On the other hand, it was argued that presentations, according to the uniform sense of the Church of Scotland, had always been considered a grievance; that remonstrances against the

statute which restored the right of patrons, and petitions for the repeal of that statute, had from time to time been presented to Government by the General Assembly; and that their Commission, which met at intervening periods for the despatch of ecclesiastical business, had been invariably instructed to keep this important object constantly in view, and to omit no opportunity of intercession with Government, and of the adoption of the most wise and effectual measures for delivering the Church of Scotland from an intrusion of civil power, so injurious to the interests of religion, and so destructive of the harmony and peace of Christian congregations. But what particularly may be considered as the stronghold of the popular clergy, was the law of the Church, which renders a call on the part of the people of the parish an indispensable qualification to constitute the pastoral relation, and authorize the presbytery to proceed to ordination. Here, then, was a collision of jurisdiction, which involved the moderate party in an excruciating dilemma, and exposed the measures they abetted to the imputation of the most glaring inconsistency. It often happened that the call in favour of the pre-

sentee consisted exclusively of the names and signatures of the patron and non-resident heritors; but I do not recollect a single instance, within the time of my attendance on the General Assembly, of any call in the favour of a presentee having been rejected or set aside. This was the quarter in which the moderate clergy, or the advocates for the right of patrons, encountered the most formidable resistance, and in which all the energy of their opponents was exerted.

The difference of sentiment on these subjects, which were understood at that time to involve the interests of religion, was not confined to ecclesiastical judicatories, but extended to the members of the Establishment at large, and to individuals of every station. Persons in public offices, and most of the heritors, supported the measures and applauded the conduct of the moderate party; while the great body of the people, and not a few individuals of higher rank, inheriting from their fathers the strongest attachment to the Presbyterian worship and government, considered the clergy who contended for popular elections exclusively entitled to that esteem and confidence which are due to the ministerial office.

Although, from the facts now stated, it must be admitted that persons of opposite opinions and party connections might be alike influenced by the most laudable motives, yet it was astonishing with what contumely and bitterness of spirit the adherents of the different factions spoke of their antagonists, in the discussion of any case of greater magnitude and importance. In the cases, for example, of Dr. Drysdale's presentation to Edinburgh, or of Mr. Thomson's presentation to St. Ninians,* all credit for principle and integrity were reciprocally denied to one another, by the enthusiastic retainers of the conflicting parties. In what a different light do I myself now see the characters of many persons who were the most conspicuous actors on the arena of ecclesiastical contest, from that in which they appeared to me during the agitation and dependence of questions in which I found myself interested,

* Dr. Drysdale's presentation, in 1762, to his first charge in Edinburgh (Lady Yester's), gave occasion to a protracted contest between the Town Council and what was called the General Sessions of Edinburgh, with regard to the right of the latter to take part in the nominations to the city churches; for an account of which see Morren's *Annals of the Assembly*, vol. ii., pp. 268-285. The settlement at St. Ninians occupied the attention of nine successive Assemblies, from 1767 to 1776.—Ed.

either as a private individual or a keen partizan.

The Schism Overture,* brought under the discussion of the General Assembly of May 1766, was, in all its bearings, one of the most interesting ecclesiastical affairs that have happened in the course of my life.

At the beginning of the present reign, a marked alteration took place in the state of ecclesiastical parties, and a considerable number of the clergy, formerly enlisted with the Moderates, began to give hints of a change of sentiment, and to approximate to the popular party, hitherto considered as their opponents. It were uncandid to withhold credit for conscientious principle from many individuals who deserted the ground on

* It was in the following terms:—"As the progress of the schism in this church is so very remarkable, and seems to be on the growing hand, as it is credibly affirmed that there are now 120 meeting-houses erected, to which more than 100,000 persons resort, who were formerly of our communion, but have now separated themselves from the Church of Scotland, and that the effects of this schism begin to appear, and are likely to take root in the greatest and most populous towns; it is humbly overtured (proposed) that the venerable Assembly would take under their mature consideration this alarming evil, which hath so threatening an aspect to this church, to the interests of religion, and to the peace of the country; and that they would provide such remedies against this schism, as in their great wisdom they shall judge most proper."—Ed.

which they had formerly stood; and, instead of uniform unqualified support of the right of patrons, expressed their doubts concerning the expediency of enforcing settlements in cases of a violent opposition to the presentee on the part of the parish. They themselves repudiated the charge of inconsistency. As good citizens, they considered it their bounden duty to support the law of the land, and, upon that principle solely, they had hitherto argued and voted in support of the right of patrons. But, having found no abatement in the aversion of the people against presentations, and that the pernicious effects of violent settlements had exceeded all foresight and calculation, particularly by multiplying the number and increasing the influence of dissenting sects, they now regarded it as their urgent duty to inquire if any expedient could be adopted for stemming the torrent of schism, and restoring the unity, the peace, and the dignity of the Established Church. Presentations had always been considered as a grievance by the Church of Scotland, and motions for the repeal of the statute 1711, restoring the rights of patrons, had been adopted repeatedly at an early period by the ecclesiastical courts,

founded upon the suspicion and dread, rather than the actual existence, of imputed evils. The experiment of the law had now been tried for more than half a century, and its pernicious effects were felt and lamented. Christian harmony was dissolved—parishes and families rent and divided —the reputation and dignity essential to the usefulness of a legal establishment lessened or annihilated. Considering how inseparably the interests of the church and state are interwoven, and dependent upon each other, and how much the popular influence of the regular clergy must conduce to the promotion of loyalty and order, there was the strongest reason for believing that a temperate statement of these facts would have such weight with the legislature as to obtain either a repeal of the law of patronage, or such a modification of it as would prove effectual to put a stop to the further progress of the mischiefs represented. The first step necessary to open the way for the desired application, was to ascertain, upon satisfactory evidence, the rapid and wide spread of religious dissention or schism, and the progress which it had already made. In prosecution of this design, it was proposed by the

supporters of the overture that an inquiry should be instituted as to the causes and extent of schism, and the most expedient measures for remedying that evil.

The discussion of the Schism Overture gave occasion to one of the most learned, eloquent, and interesting debates that ever had occurred in the General Assembly. The fate of contending parties seemed to be suspended upon the decision of this question. The debate lasted from ten in the morning to the same hour in the evening. The pernicious effects of the schism, in a religious, moral, and political view, having been portrayed in the darkest colours, and imputed to the law of patronage, both the cause and extent of the evil were denied by the opponents of the overture. It was affirmed, that at no period since the Reformation, had the church established by law comprehended a greater portion of the mass of the people than at the commencement of the present reign. In illustration of this fact, a reference was made to the number who continued to adhere to the Roman Catholic faith after the Reformation, to that of the Presbyterians who dissented from the establishment of Episcopacy,

during the reign of Charles II., and, again, to the number of Episcopalians who separated from the church after the restoration of Presbytery, in 1692; and hence, it was concluded, that the aggregate body of dissenters, of whatever description—Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Seceders, combined—did not bear such a numerical proportion to the present existing establishment as the dissenters had done in the two centuries immediately subsequent to the Reformation. But, admitting schism to be as much a grievance as had been represented, and to be fraught with all the evils ascribed to it, the opponents of the overture contended that it was unfair to specify the law of patronage as the exclusive cause of schism. From the exercise of free inquiry, the inalienable right of human nature, now happily recognised by the legislature, it was naturally to be expected that a variety of opinions would be set afloat, and give birth to new forms of worship and faith, incroaching upon the influence and numerical strength of the Established Church.

Dr. Cuming* had long been regarded as the ecclesiastical minister under the patronage of

* See above, p. 18.

Archibald Duke of Argyle,* and had been zealously instrumental in supporting the right of patrons in every case of disputed settlement that came before the church courts. He was chosen moderator of the General Assembly in 1752, on the occasion of the deposition of Mr. Gillespie,† which was branded by the popular party as the most vindictive measure that ever had been adopted to overawe opposition to presentations. The overpowering eloquence, however, displayed by Dr. Robertson in the debate on that question, decided his unrivalled superiority as a public speaker, and soon secured for that eminent person the position of leader of the General Assembly. It was at this time suspected that offended pride and jealousy was the principal cause of the change of sentiments avowed by Dr. Cuming and some of his adherents. The Schism Overture was introduced by Mr. Bannerman, minister of Saltoun, Dr. Cuming's near

* For many years at the head of affairs in Scotland. He died 15th April 1761, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

† The Rev. Thomas Gillespie, minister of Carnock, was deposed by the General Assembly for disobedience to its injunctions in the case of a disputed settlement in the Presbytery of Dunfermline. See the *Life of Dr. Robertson*, p. 282, for the reasons of the course then followed by the Assembly. Mr. Gillespie became the founder of the body of dissenters known by the name of the Relief Presbytery.—Ed.

relation and confidential friend, seconded by Dr. Oswald, minister of Methven, and defended by many of the most respectable of the clergy who had been Dr. Cuming's staunch partizans. The overture was rejected by a considerable majority of votes.

I shall here embrace the opportunity of delivering my own opinion concerning the effects of schism.

There was a time within my memory, when, with a very few exceptions, secession from the Established Church was regarded as, in every view, teeming with incalculable mischief. If the number of individuals who entertain such an opinion is now diminished, it affords at least a presumptive proof that experience has not justified these gloomy forebodings. So far from believing secession and schism to be evils, I am inclined to think that they have been productive of beneficial effects with respect to the ecclesiastical establishment, as well as to the more important interests of religion. It will not be denied that the influence of religion upon the great body of the people must, in no small degree, depend upon the fidelity, the diligence, and

exemplary conduct of its officiating ministers The first and most obvious effect of secession is to excite, if I may so express it, a competition for character between the Established clergy and their Dissenting brethren. The lower ranks of the people may not be qualified to discern the nicer shades of moral distinction; they may be deceived by arrogant pretensions, and fallacious forms of virtue; but they are sufficiently qualified to judge of those departments of ministerial duty which come under their own observation, and relate to their own edification and comfort; and I have no doubt of its being found, upon inquiry, that the ministerial duties of preaching, examination, visiting the sick, etc., are generally performed with more exemplary diligence and regularity in parishes where the dissenting interest has got footing, and the parishioners enjoy the opportunity of choosing between the Church and the Secession.

But, supposing these advantages to be conceded, are they not counterbalanced by the animosity, the spleen, the censorious and malevolent spirit, nourished by schismatical principles? In reply to this insinuation, I am now to state

what at first view may appear paradoxical, but what I really believe to be a fact, namely, that diversity of religious opinions and sects have promoted charity, and the more active and habitual exercise of the virtues of candour, meekness and forbearance. These virtues, dormant and sluggish in a monotonous state of external religious unanimity, are called forth, and always more eminently displayed in instances where legal toleration has given unrestrained scope to freedom of sentiment, and diversity of religious names and institutions.

It is a fact that will not be denied by such as are versant in modern history, that political necessity more than rational argument, has been the parent of religious toleration. The tyranny of Philip II. of Spain united the interests and affections of the Flemish provinces, which, adhering to different modes of worship and faith, were reduced to the necessity of forgetting and suspending all internal animosities. They found that, during the turbulence of war, it was possible to live peaceably in the same camp. Made wise by experience, the United Provinces adopted the principle of toleration as the basis of their civil constitution, when

their independence was achieved by the combined bravery and perseverance of Protestants and Roman Catholics. From the same causes, the spirit and habit of toleration descend, in the long run, to domestic life among all ranks and conditions of society. When dissent commenced—I am now speaking from the experience of what I have myself seen and observed—the harmony of families was disturbed, and social intercourse interrupted. Husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbours who had lived together upon the most friendly terms, could not resort to different places of worship, or maintain discordant opinions with respect to what they believed to be fundamental in religion, without abatement of esteem and interruption of affection. The ardent zeal of recent conversion often whetted acrimony of spirit, and produced harsh censures and unseemly quarrels among relations and fellow-citizens. A temper and conduct so much at variance with the ties of nature, so contrary to convenience and tranquillity, nay, often destructive of family peace, could not be long maintained. Nature, common sense, interest, revolted against it. Religious animosity began to subside. More

pure and extensive views of Christian charity were adopted, and more liberality exercised. Difference of opinion, in our own times, with respect to the doctrines of religion and forms of worship, instead of being the cause of animosity or hatred, are looked upon as motives to forbearance and charity. From my own long experience, I might specify many remarkable facts to corroborate the arguments upon which I have formed so decided an opinion concerning the propitious moral tendency of dissent necessarily connected with liberty of conscience and freedom of inquiry. But I do not confine the beneficial effects of religious liberty to what has already happened. I foresee—and with no slender confidence anticipate—the most substantial and important benefits to the true interests of religion resulting at no distant day from the conscientious efforts of learned and enlightened members of dissenting congregations, prompted and encouraged by the spirit of liberality which is now so generally diffused under the influence of constitutional toleration.

I now return to historical subjects, and shall begin with a short account of a few of those per-

sons who were the leaders of parties, and who displayed eminent abilities in the course of the most interesting debates that occurred in the Supreme Judicatory of the Church of Scotland.

Dr. Jardine,* minister of the Tron Church, Edinburgh, and Dean of the Thistle, was regarded as the oracle of the moderate party. He was endowed with a sound understanding, and had acquired a rich fund of political information, the favourite object of his study. A thorough knowledge of the world, and a sagacious discernment of character, united to a benevolent heart, rendered him the wisest adviser, and most active agent in the superintendence of all the public charitable institutions under the management of the ministers of the city, and made him the instrument of numberless good offices to individuals who enjoyed his patronage. From his connection with Provost Drummond, whose daughter he had married, he was believed to have had a considerable sway in all the deliberations concerning the affairs of the city of Edinburgh.† I have the best

* Born 1715, died 1766.

† ——"The old provost, who danced to the whistle
Of that arch-politician, the Dean of the Thistle."
Contemporary Verses by Lord Dreghorn.

authority for believing that it was in compliance with his opinion, the Town-Council abandoned the popular and long established practice of supplying the vacant churches according to the majority of the votes of the kirk-sessions, and began to exercise the right of presentation, which had always legally belonged to them. Dr. Jardine was a declared adversary to timid policy, and temporizing concessions. He never took any part in the debates in the ecclesiastical courts, for he had not a talent for ready speaking, but his private counsels furnished the ground-work and arguments for the boldest and most interesting measures which were adopted by the ostensible leaders of the moderate party.

Dr. Jardine had made considerable progress in composing a history of the rebellion 1745, and had collected many valuable documents for throwing light upon that event. From the way in which he conversed on that subject, I was led to conclude that his work must have been far advanced, if not finished at the time of his death. Upon the question being put to him by Lord Somerville in my presence, when his history was to be published, he answered, that every book

that possessed any merit would in due time see the light. He had obtained, however, such evidence of the wanton cruelties perpetrated by the Duke of Cumberland and his officers after the battle of Culloden, that it must have been highly offensive to publish his history during the Duke's life; and I have heard this reason assigned for the delay of the publication.

Notwithstanding his occupation in study, and in the management of public affairs, Dr. Jardine allotted a great portion of his time to the discharge of the offices of private friendship. I shall never forget his frankness towards myself, and the warmth with which he entered into every plan for serving me. His death was very sudden. He was present at the long debate on the Schism Overture, anxiously interested in the issue of the question, and, while the vote was calling, fell back from his seat, and instantly expired. This afflictive stroke was aggravated by the confinement of his wife, at the time, after the birth of their last child, Mr. Henry Jardine, now deputy King's Remembrancer.* Mrs. Jardine sunk into deep depression, and died in a few weeks after her husband.

* Afterwards Sir Henry Jardine.

As a public speaker, Dr. Robertson rose to unexampled eminence. To express it in the fewest words, he was the most forcible and the most persuasive speaker I have ever heard. His arguments, too, in every debate were so judiciously selected and arranged, so perspicuously illustrated and enforced, that he never failed to make himself immediately understood by the persons whom he addressed. There was no interval of obscurity—no suspense of thought—no relaxation of attention on the part of his audience—no perplexity or hesitation with respect to the aim and tendency of his pleading. And if he made use of a doubtful or controvertible argument, it was so coloured and embellished, that ingenuity and reflection were necessary to detect the fallacy, and repel the conclusion it was intended to produce. Then he never descended to personal invective or abuse, nor insinuated any contempt of the talents, or any illiberal suspicion of the motives of his most acrimonious opponents. He erred, perhaps, in a contrary direction, by adopting too much the language of adulation and compliment; and, by flattering the vanity of petulant and superficial wranglers, he sometimes offended the pride, and excited the jealousy of his more zealous

adherents. The readiness and fluency of Dr. Robertson's elocution were no less wonderful than its perspicuity and force. On every occasion, in his extemporaneous speeches—for instance in his reply to arguments which it was impossible he could have foreseen—he expressed himself with not less accuracy, elegance, and energy, than in his written compositions.

There was not any member of the General Assembly who was listened to with more attention, or who, as a speaker, was more successful in producing conviction than Principal Campbell of Aberdeen.* The closeness, the force, the condensed precision of his reasoning, exceed the power of description. Not a single superfluous word was used,—no weak or doubtful argument introduced. Like a mathematical demonstration, every topic produced accumulation of proof, and prepared his audience for the more complete assent to the conclusion drawn from it. His person and manner indicated such simplicity of character, such indifference either to personal

* George Campbell, D.D., author of *A Dissertation on Miracles*, in answer to Mr. Hume's Essay; and of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Born 1709, died 1796.—Ed.

consequence or the interests of party, that it was impossible to deny him as much credit for the purity of his heart as for the transcendant excellence of his understanding. Although he coincided with Dr. Robertson in every case relative to presentations and the settlement of vacant parishes, yet I remember that in some questions of considerable moment, he divided with the minority, which, from the power of his arguments, was, on such occasions, more considerable than in most other cases decided by calling the votes of the members.

The speeches of Principal Tullidelph from St. Andrews* were characterized by an ardent and vehement eloquence. Dr. Gerard,† Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen, was distinguished for accurate copious reasoning. Principal Murison of St. Andrews,‡ Mr. Ferguson of Mulin, Duncan Macfarlan,§ minister of Drymen, and Dr. Ker, minister

* Died 1777.

† Alexander Gerard, D.D., author of an *Essay on Taste*, and other works. Born 1728, died 1795.—Ed.

‡ See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iv., pp. 60, etc. He was principal of St. Mary's College, and died in 1779.—Ed.

§ The father of the late venerable principal of the University of Glasgow, who was also for some years minister of Drymen. Mr. Macfarlan died in 1791, in the eighty-fourth year of his age.—Ed.

of Forfar, all supported the moderate interest with great ability. The plain good sense, expressed with astonishing ease and propriety, which generally marked the speeches at the bar by ministers from the country, who were not in the habit of taking part otherwise in public business, would have done honour to any assembly or court in the kingdom. Many Lords of Session, advocates, and country gentlemen of rank and opulence, sat as ruling elders on the benches of the General Assembly, and, both by their presence and the part they took in its business, contributed to the dignity of the court; and some of those Scottish gentlemen who were afterwards most highly distinguished in Parliament, first gave promise of eminent capacity for public affairs in the Assembly. Of this number were Sir Gilbert Elliot,* who became Treasurer of the Navy—Mr. Wedderburn,† afterwards Lord Chancellor—Mr. Dundas, who filled the highest offices of state

* The third baronet, who is frequently mentioned afterwards, and who died in 1777.

† Lord Chancellor Loughborough, and first Earl of Rosslyn; born 1733, died 1805.

—Mr. Dempster*—Mr. Johnstone, afterwards Sir William Pulteney.†

Dr. Dick was, beyond all competition, the ablest antagonist Dr. Robertson had to contend with during the long period of his leadership of the Assembly. He was eminently fitted to excel as a public speaker, by extensive and accurate information on every subject of debate, a penetrating discernment, which enabled him to perceive what was vulnerable in the position of his opponents, a complete knowledge of judicial forms and precedents, great fluency and readiness of elocution, set off with prepossessing dignity of address. In his early life he was understood to be a friend to the interests of the moderate party; and the supposed change of his principles, political and ecclesiastical, was imputed by his adversaries to fretfulness or ill-humour, occasioned by neglect, of which, indeed, he had but too much reason to complain.‡ But from whatever cause arising, it detracted from

* George Dempster, Esq., of Dunnichen, M.P. for Fife. Died in 1818, aged eighty-two.—Ed. † Died 13th December 1770.

† Another cause of his depression was found in his embarrassed circumstances, arising out of the loss he sustained by the decision of the House of Lords in the famous Lanark case—[for which see Morren's *Annals*, vol. i., p. 169]

the respectability of his character and the weight of his personal influence; and, as he was seldom returned a member of the General Assembly, and often prevented from attending the inferior courts by bad health, he may be regarded as an admired rather than an efficient leader of the popular party.

Dr. Erskine, on all occasions, supported the popular interest in the Church courts. His speeches were full of substantial, pertinent matter, and more effective than those of most of his party. He entered, indeed, into political contests, civil and religious, with a keenness and zeal which one would hardly have expected from the ordinary gravity of his demeanour, and the conscientious diligence with which he devoted himself to the promotion of the more weighty interests of his ministerial profession. But the established goodness of his character, not only atoned, even in the eyes of the most censorious, for the slighter shades of party spirit, but gave an authority to his opinion signally serviceable to the popular interest.

There were few more weighty speakers in the Church courts on the popular side than Dr. Witherspoon,* minister of Paisley. His manner was

* Born 1722, died at Princetown, New Jersey, 1794.

inanimate and drawling; but the depth of his judgment, the solidity of his arguments, and the aptitude with which they were illustrated and applied, never failed to produce a strong impression on the Assembly. To singular sagacity he united a large share of sarcastic wit, which was displayed in several of his publications, but particularly in the "Ecclesiastical Characteristics," —a ludicrous and acrimonious description of the principles, political sentiments, and private characters of many of the moderate clergy. In 1768 Dr. Witherspoon, having been elected President of the College of Princetown, in New Jersey, left this country for America. He afterwards became a member of the American Congress, and took a prominent part in all the measures adopted by that assembly. Some of Dr. Witherspoon's speeches in the Congress are now published; and I am pleased to find that he does justice to the character of the king, and censures the error of the generality of the American patriots in imputing the war solely to his Majesty's instigation and obstinacy—representing it in its true light, as having been prompted and carried on by the desire of the British nation at large.

Mr. Fairbairn, minister of Dumbarton, was remarkable for rough petulant eloquence, in attacking the measures proposed by Dr. Robertson, and the readiness and vivacity of his replies and extemporaneous speeches. But as there was too obvious an intention to make a show of his own superior talents, and to secure applause rather than to produce conviction, he did not render essential service to his associates. The same reproach attached to most of the younger members, distinguished by their zealous declamations on the side of opposition. A great portion of their speeches consisted in a sort of manifesto, or declaration of principles, with respect to ecclesiastical policy, and the best mode of supplying vacant parishes, which was generally irrelevant to the questions under discussion, and tiresome to impartial hearers of every party. And this was sometimes given with such confident protestations of their own integrity and disinterestedness, as seemed to exclude their opponents from all pretensions to the same honourable motives.

Mr. Crosbie* the advocate, frequently returned a member of the General Assembly as a ruling

* The "Counsellor Pleydell" of *Guy Mannering*.

elder, was by far the most respectable and powerful lay champion for the popular interest. He was a man of the strictest honour, and wise and learned above most of his profession. His zeal, his information, and manly eloquence, strenuously exerted in support of the right of the people to elect their own minister, revived the zeal of his party, and reinvigorated their hopes of success, which had begun to languish from the control of the servants of government, and the general disapprobation of the laity of rank and independent fortune. Mr. Crosbie possessed a vigorous constitution; but, being too much addicted to social festivity, he sunk into intemperate habits, which brought him to his grave at an untimely age. The failure of the Douglas and Heron Bank made a deep impression upon his spirits. As he had been a principal adviser in that speculation, and had a large share at stake, its miscarriage at once seemed to impeach his penetration, and plunged him into deep embarrassment. The goodness of his heart, and his transcendent abilities, made his death universally lamented.

The singular talents of Dr. Webster,* his dex-

* Born 1707, died 1784.

terity in business, and his substantial services to his brethren and the public, entitled him to distinguished celebrity among his contemporaries. He was for more than forty years considered the head of the popular party, and admired as one of the ablest speakers in the ecclesiastical courts. He was deficient in literature, and applied little of his time to reading or study. Few of his sermons, as I have been informed, were fully written out, and the subjects of them little varied, being mostly confined to doctrinal points of orthodoxy, or the fourfold state of man;* but the fluency and copiousness of his expression, and the vivacity and animation of his manner and address, arrested the attention of the most judicious, and excited the admiration of the multitude. In the Church courts he uniformly espoused the popular side of the question under debate. His arguments were specious rather than cogent, and yet he never failed to impress his hearers with a high opinion of his strong native good sense, and his knowledge of the world. The speeches of Dr.

* 1. What man was in the state of innocence; 2. What he was after the fall; 3. What he is under the Gospel in a state of grace; 4. What he shall be in his eternal state. A popular work by Mr. Boston treats of these subjects under the title of the "Fourfold State."

Webster, too, were enlivened with such brilliant sallies of wit, that no public speaker was listened to with greater delight and applause. His capacity for financial business, and a profound skill in arithmetical calculation, rendered him an instrument of extensive public usefulness. It is a curious fact, that while Dr. Webster and Provost Drummond were regarded as political adversaries, they consulted and co-operated in the promotion of the city interests. I heard Dr. Webster himself say, that, by his advice, the Town Council had adopted the measure of appointing a chamberlain to be constantly and entirely entrusted with the business of the revenue, instead of a treasurer annually elected. By the adoption of this measure, their accounts have ever since been kept with greater exactness and fidelity.

The scheme for the benefit of the widows of the ministers of the Church of Scotland, was first suggested, and chiefly promoted, by the services of Dr. Webster. In framing the plan, and particularly in the detail of calculations, he derived important assistance from the Rev. Dr. Wallace, and Mr. Maclaurin,* Professor of Mathematics.

* The celebrated author of the *Geometria Organica*, and the *Treatise*

Mr. Bogue, a dissenting minister, who lately published a *History of the Dissenters*, ascribes* this important work to Dr. Price, of Newington. The inaccuracy of this assumption I am enabled to assert from personal knowledge. In a conversation I had with Dr. Price at his own house in April 1769, he introduced the subject of the widows' scheme in Scotland, asking some questions relative to its management and results, which I found myself incompetent to answer. He requested that, after my return to Scotland, I would do him the favour of transmitting to him the annual reports of the trustees of the fund, together with any other papers tending to throw light on that subject—the more interesting to him because he intended soon to publish a work on schemes for providing similar annuities. I was happy in having an opportunity of obliging a person so highly esteemed, and sent him all the annual

on Fluxions. He died at Edinburgh in June 1746, at the age of forty-eight. In the Latin epitaph over his grave in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, composed by his son Lord Dreghorn, and revised by Samuel Johnson, there is a reference to the fact mentioned in a previous note (*supra*, p. 20), that Maclaurin was appointed to the chair of mathematics "ipso Newtono suadente."—Ed.

* Vol. ii. p. 603. Second Edition.—Ed.

reports, with several other papers relative to the widows' fund. After the perusal of the documents, Dr. Price, either in the above publication, or in a detached pamphlet, expressed an unfavourable opinion of our fund, and specified what appeared to him, in a theoretical view, errors in calculation. This produced a letter from Dr. Webster in answer to Dr. Price's objections, with which Dr. Price was so entirely satisfied, that he candidly acknowledged that he had been too precipitate in his censure; and he expressed unqualified approbation of the widows' scheme, and of the ability and correctness of its author.

Dr. Webster shone above all his contemporaries in social life; and the pleasantry and gaiety of his conversation, his command of amusing anecdotes, and the sprightliness of his wit, always good-natured and inoffensive, rendered him the most delightful companion to persons of every age and rank. His innate sagacity, his love of convivial festivity and mirth, and the preference which he always shewed, in the choice of his company, for persons who notoriously differed from him in theological sentiments and party attachments, occasioned doubts with respect to the sincerity of

his public conduct, and staggered the confidence of some of those with whom he acted in ecclesiastical affairs. The part he took in the events which happened at Cambuslang, by publishing his belief of their supernatural character, appeared to many an extravagance irreconcilable with the shrewdness and knowledge of mankind in which he surpassed all his party friends, and excited a suspicion of the affectation rather than the genuine impulse of popular enthusiasm.

I am disposed to put confidence in Dr. Webster's sincerity. His zeal for religion was manifested at an early period of his life, by his relinquishing the mercantile business into which he had entered with high prospects of success, and devoting himself to the laborious and ungainful profession of a Scots clergyman; and he gave other proofs of religious earnestness, which it were to the last degree uncharitable to ascribe to artifice.

During the period of my University course, I frequently attended the Court of Session. The generality of the speakers were at that time little studious of elegance and correctness of language, and still less of the graces of address and good

delivery. There were, however, not wanting a few distinguished exceptions.

Mr. Pringle* of Haining, afterwards advanced to the bench by the name of Lord Alemoor, was, beyond comparison, the most admired speaker at the Scottish bar in the middle of the last century: nor do I think that he has ever been surpassed by any individual who has flourished, either at the bar or on the bench since his time. His language was pure and nervous, his arguments the most sound and substantial, shortly and distinctly stated, and strictly applicable to the point under discussion. Nothing appeared to be studied for effect; he used no action nor artificial embellishment; but the native dignity of his manner, and the force and perspicuity of his reasoning, always commanded attention. Mr. Lockhart,† whose style of speaking was rapid and vehement, shewed unrivalled ingenuity either in concealing or detecting the weak points of a bad cause, and making the most of one that was doubtful. Mr. Ferguson of Pitfour‡ was consulted as the soundest

* Died in the year 1776.

† Afterwards Lord Covington. Died in 1782, aged eighty-one.

‡ Died 1777.

and most learned lawyer among all his contemporaries, and was universally respected for the invariable rectitude of his professional conduct, as well as his private virtues. He did not shine at the bar. Although the public opinion had long destined Mr. Lockhart and Mr. Ferguson to the first honours of their profession, their promotion to the bench was postponed till the beginning of the present reign (when they were far advanced in life), on account of their own suspected attachment, or that of their connections, to the house of Stuart, a circumstance which, from the accession of the Hanoverian family, had, with few exceptions, invalidated every claim, however strong, to court patronage. Mr. Dundas of Arniston,* the king's advocate, possessed uncommon quickness of apprehension, and had great command of language; but his speeches were verbose and declamatory, his manner dictatorial and passionate, and his arguments often superficial and irrelevant. He afterwards made an excellent President of the Court of Session, and by his acuteness and diligence gave a despatch to business which never had been previously known under the ablest of his predecessors.

* The younger President Dundas, who died at Edinburgh in 1787.

Mr. Wedderburn, who rose to the highest reputation as a speaker at the English bar, and as a Judge, had at this time just begun his career at the Scotch bar with the highest eclat. Fortunately for himself, as it happened, he was very soon led to relinquish his profession in Scotland—a reproof from the bench, in consequence of the incivility and rudeness with which he had, in presence of the Judges, attacked Mr. Lockhart, the Dean of Faculty, having been the immediate occasion of this hazardous step.*

Several Scottish lawyers, then at the bar or on the bench, enjoyed the highest reputation for genius and literature, as Sir David Dalrymple,† afterwards Lord Hailes; Sir John Dalrymple,‡

* *Supra*, p. 97, note. The tradition of his having stripped off his gown in the Court after the reproof from the bench referred to in the text, declaring that he would no longer plead at a bar where he was exposed to insult, is well known. Chief-Commissioner Adam, in his privately-printed *Sequel to the Gift of a Grandfather*, containing some curious sketches of the men of those times, says (p. 36) that Mr. Wedderburn had always intended to leave the Scotch for the English bar, and only took the opportunity of the altercation with Mr. Lockhart to act upon his previous determination.—Ed.

† The author of the *Annals of Scotland* and a very great number of other works. Born 1726, died 1792.—Ed.

‡ Author of *Memoirs of Great Britain; Tracts on Feudal Law*, etc.—Ed.

afterwards a Baron of Exchequer; Lord Kames,* whose numerous publications on law, philosophy, metaphysics, theology, criticism, and agriculture, afford examples of such varied endowments as have seldom been united in the same individual; and Lord Monboddo.† The eccentric philological dissertations of the last-named judge, must at least be admired as proofs of singular industry and ingenuity, and of very great proficiency in ancient literature. Had he not been known by his most intimate friends as a person of the purest integrity and honour, he could not have escaped the suspicion of an affectation of credulity; but he believed in every fact in which he professed to believe, and exhibited the most extraordinary mixture of intellectual superiority and weakness, that perhaps ever occurred in any literary man in an enlightened age.

* Henry Home of Kames, born 1696, died 1782. He is perhaps most generally known by his *Elements of Criticism*, first published in 1762. It is hardly necessary to refer here to the Memoir of the Life and Writings of Lord Kames, by Lord Woodhouselee, as a work which contains many interesting notices of the literature and the literary men of Scotland during the greater part of the last century.—Ed.

† James Burnet of Monboddo, author of a *Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of Language* (6 vols. 8vo); *Ancient Metaphysics* (6 vols. 4to); and other works. He died in 1799, at the age of eighty-five.—Ed.

While I was in Edinburgh, the Douglas cause, which, in all its circumstances, may be considered the most celebrated that ever came under the decision of the Court of Session, was in progress before that court. No person who did not live at the time this cause was depending, can form any conception of the agitation, the anxiety, the polemical spirit, which it excited among the inhabitants of the metropolis, and, indeed, far and wide throughout the country. It was a constant subject of conversation in companies of every description. Families of all ranks ranged themselves on different sides of the contest. Members of the same family were often at variance with one another; and, as generally happens, the heat and violence of the opposite partizans were inflamed by the intricate and embarrassing circumstances which encumbered the question at issue. I shall never forget the keenness with which many ladies of my acquaintance entered into this controversy, which gave me a new and no depreciating view of feminine acuteness and eloquence.

During the winter 1763-4, I resided with Lord Somerville in the abbey of Holyroodhouse. The apartment assigned to me was distinguished

by the name of Lady Anne's room, having been occupied by her ladyship* while her father lived in Scotland (1679-1682), during the agitation of the exclusion bill. My room was immediately opposite to, and very near the abbey chapel, the walls of which were mouldering from the weight of the roof, which was afterwards taken down; and I was sometimes under great alarm from the apprehension of the stones falling into the window of my room.

While I was Lord Somerville's inmate, he often treated me with a ticket to the play-house, situated not far from the abbey, in the middle of the Canongate. I was, perhaps to a culpable degree, fond of such amusements, and I derived great pleasure from indulging my taste. At the period of which I am now writing, the Edinburgh theatre had not obtained a license; and the performances were announced in the newspapers and handbills under the name of a "Concert of Music."†

* The Lady Anne here mentioned is of course the second daughter of James II. (then Duke of York), who afterwards became Queen of England.—Ed.

† The following [copy of a] play-bill of the year 1762 (which I happen to have preserved) may be deemed curious. Besides illustrating the fact adverted to in the text, it gives the names of many of the principal performers who appeared in the Canongate play-house during the time of my residence in Edinburgh:—

Thirty-ſecond Night of SUBSCRIPTION.

THIS EVENING being MONDAY, 22d FEB., 1762,
A CONCERT OF MUSIC.

Between the parts of which will be preſented (Gratis)

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA.

Captain Macheath, Mr. DIGGES;
Peachum, Mr. LOVE;
Lockit, Mr. LANCASHIRE;
Filch, Mr. PARSONS;
Mat o' the Mint, Mr. PHILLIPS;
Ben Budge, Mr. CUNNINGHAM; | Robin o' Bagshot, Mr. STANDEN;
Nimming Ned, Mr. AICKIN; | Jemmy Twitcher, Master HAMILTON;
Wat Dreary, Mr. WHITE; | Beggar, Mr. COOKES;
Player, Mr. KING; | Drawer, Miss DALE.
Mrs. Peachum, Mrs. HAMILTON;
Jenny Diver, Mrs. AICKIN;
Mrs. Slammekin, Miss PHILLIPS;
Suky Tawdry, Mrs. BROOKE;
Mrs. Coaxer, Mrs. WHITE;
Molly Brazen, Mrs. DALE;
Lucy, Mrs. PARSONS;
Polly Peachum, Mrs. MOZEEN.

To conclude with a Country Dance by the Characters.

To which will be added A FARCE, called,

The Vintner Trick'd.

Vizard, Mr. PARSONS;
Mixum, Mr. LANCASHIRE. Mrs. Mixum, Mrs. PARSONS.

TICKETS to be had at Mr. Millican's New Stage Coach Office at the Cross, at the Old Coffee-House, and of Mr. Hedy in the Area of the Concert-Hall, where Places in the Boxes may be taken.

BOXES and PIT 2sh. 6d. GALLERY 1sh. 6d. UPPER GALLERY 1sh.
To begin precisely at SIX o'Clock.

No Perſon whatever will be admitted behind the Scenes.

On TUESDAY,

THE PROVOK'D HUSBAND;

OR A JOURNEY TO LONDON.

Lord Townly, Mr. DIGGES.

I may here mention that theatrical amusements had been introduced into the city of Edinburgh early in the eighteenth century to the great offence of the generality of the inhabitants, who had made various attempts to suppress them, and were still considered by the graver citizens and most of the clergy as an unlawful and dangerous source of amusement. So late as the year 1757, Mr. Home,* minister of Athelstaneford, the author of "Douglas," who first had his tragedy acted in Edinburgh, was, on this ground, prosecuted by his brethren in the Presbytery of Haddington, By resigning his ministerial charge, Mr. Home himself withdrew from the reach of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; but several other ministers, his intimate friends, were libelled by the different presbyteries to which they belonged, for having attended the representation, and were subjected to ecclesiastical penalties—namely, public rebuke and suspension.† This severity of discipline did not

* Born 1722, died 1808.

† The proceedings in the Church Courts in connection with the representation of "Douglas," will be found reported at considerable length in the *Scots Magazine*. For a remarkable contribution to the secret history of these proceedings, and many curious particulars regarding the play and its author, the reader need not be referred to the recently

serve the purpose intended by it, but rather was the means of rendering theatrical entertainments more frequented and more respectable. The debates on the question of the unlawfulness of stage-plays, and the immoral effects of attending them, produced many interesting and eloquent speeches, both in the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, and in the General Assembly of 1757. The lay members of the Assembly—among whom were Lord Alemoor, Sir John Dalrymple, and Mr. Wedderburn,—and the ablest of the moderate clergy, defended the conduct of the ministers who had been present at the acting of "Douglas," some of them even going so far as to recommend the theatre as a school of moral improvement. It happened about the same time, that performers, of both sexes, of merit far superior to any who had

published and universally read *Autobiography of Dr. Carlyle*, who was one of the most conspicuous offenders on the occasion in question, and the intimate friend of Home, as of most of the eminent men of his day. A list of the principal contemporary publications to which the controversy gave rise, is given in the article "John Home," in the Encyclopædia Britannica. It must be added that, whatever may be said of the wisdom of the steps taken by the Church Courts at the period in question, public opinion would not at present, any more than it did a hundred years ago, absolve Mr. Home and his clerical supporters from the charge of an impropriety which justly exposed them to censure.—Ed.

before appeared, were introduced on the Edinburgh stage, making it the most fashionable resort of public amusement; and as the clergy ceased to inveigh against this indulgence, the scandal of attending the play-house was soon entirely done away.

CHAPTER III.

1764-1769.

IN the year 1764, I obtained license as a probationer, from the presbytery of Edinburgh, and I was ordained minister of Minto on the 24th April 1767.

Between my license and ordination several unsuccessful applications for a living had been made in my behalf by Lord Somerville and other friends. The circumstances and result of one of these were at the time deeply interesting to me. The appointment in question—the parish of Langton, in Berwickshire—was in itself of little value, in comparison with another object associated with it, which engrossed my heart and thoughts. My cousin Miss Dickson was the object of my warmest affection. While at school, I lived in her father's house like a member of the family.

When I entered college, it happened that she also came to Edinburgh to live with her aunt Miss Haldane, and few days passed without my being in her company. As she was not ignorant of my attachment, and seemed pleased with it, though I had not ventured to declare it explicitly, I entertained no doubt that my settlement at Langton, so near her father's family, would insure a speedy accomplishment of my fondest hopes. I had very soon, however, the mortification to learn that the patron of Langton had given the presentation to another candidate. A more serious disappointment awaited me. When, a few months after, I declared my affection to Miss Dickson in direct terms, she announced to me that she never could be more nearly related to me, and that she had come under an irrevocable engagement to another.* As I recollected many tokens of her marked attachment to me, it aggravated my vexation to think that my dilatory conduct or childish bashfulness had been the cause of a disappointment which, as I then supposed, I never should be able to forget.

* Mr. Dobie, of the East India Company's service, whom she soon afterwards married.

A few weeks after my settlement at Minto, Sir Gilbert Elliot came to reside there during the recess of Parliament. I was invited to become an inmate in his family, an offer too flattering and advantageous to be declined. To this incident I have been indebted for the opportunity of acquiring a more enlarged acquaintance with the world, and greater literary advantages than would otherwise have been in my power, as well as the friendly efforts with which he and his son, Lord Minto, have entered into every plan for the promotion of my interest, and that of my family. As Sir Gilbert Elliot stood high in the public esteem, and was in great favour at Court, he was visited by many people of rank and reputation; and the conversation at his table embraced great diversity of subjects. Among the persons of literary eminence whom I had thus an opportunity of meeting during my residence at Minto, were David Hume, John Home the poet, Mrs. Montagu,* Dr. Gregory,† father of the present

* The author of an "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakspeare," and the friend of Pulteney, Lyttelton, Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, and Reynolds. She died in 1800, in her eightieth year.

† Dr. John Gregory, who was born in 1724, and died in 1773. It is to the death of this eminent member of a family illustrious for heredi-

Dr. Gregory, Andrew Stewart,* Lord Kames, Dr. Robertson, and others of lesser note. Dr. Robertson read, and submitted to Sir Gilbert's criticism, the manuscript of his History of Charles the Fifth, which was soon after published. I was not present when this was going forward, but I well recollect that Sir Gilbert mentioned to his sons and me some of the corrections he had made, relative to the style and composition, specifying phrases obsolete, or peculiar to Scottish authors, that we might know and avoid them.

Sir Gilbert Elliot was a distinguished classical scholar. He had a comprehensive and accurate knowledge of history. His refined taste, and

tary genius during more than 200 years, that Beattie refers in the abrupt conclusion of "The Minstrel,"—

> "He whom each virtue fired, each grace refined,
> Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind!
> He sleeps in dust. Ah! how should I pursue
> My theme? To heart-consuming grief resign'd,
> Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
> And pour my bitter tears."

His son, Dr. James Gregory, like himself, held the offices of Professor of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, and First Physician to the King in Scotland.—Ed.

* Chiefly known in connection with the Douglas cause, in which he was a zealous agent of the Duke of Hamilton, and carried his devotion so far as to challenge Lord Thurlow, then one of the counsel for Lord Douglas. The meeting took place in Hyde Park, Jan. 14, 1769.—Ed.

wide acquaintance with works of polite literature, ancient and modern, invested him with the authority of a master critic among his learned contemporaries. He was also endowed with a large portion of poetical talent, and wrote some beautiful verses, characterized by unaffected sensibility.* His principles with respect to public affairs and the interests of his country, were uniformly liberal. With regard to religion and morals, he ever professed and inculcated sentiments the most correct and pure. He expressed a marked disapprobation of the sceptical philosophy, inculcated with unparalleled subtility and elegance, in the works of David Hume, at that time universally read, and too commonly admired.† Sir Gilbert Elliot had gained distinguished celebrity as a public speaker,

* A few of them were published. He also left a manuscript volume of poems, which, I suppose, is still in the possession of his grandson. [A "beautiful pastoral song," by Sir Gilbert Elliot, is printed in the notes to the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, beginning—

"My sheep I neglected, I broke my sheep hook," etc.—Ed.]

† Several letters between Sir Gilbert Elliot and David Hume, relative to the publication of his philosophical essays, were shewn to me by his son, the late Lord Minto. These letters were given to Professor Stewart by Lord Minto before his departure to India. [Some extracts from the correspondence will be found in Mr. Stewart's Dissertation on "The History of Metaphysical, Ethical, and Political Philosophy." Part II., note II.—Ed.]

He did not speak often in the House of Commons, but reserved himself for great questions; and it was generally admitted that his speeches excelled all which were delivered on such occasions, in acuteness of reasoning and practical information.* He was anxiously interested in the education of his sons, and when disengaged from business and company, embraced every opportunity of introducing in the course of conversation those subjects which were most adapted to their age, their studies, and their future views and conduct in life. He was a discerning judge of the characters of men, and seldom mistaken in the opinion he formed of them. His temper was placid and equal. I never saw him discomposed by any of those provocations which are considered apologies for sallies of ill-humour. Sir Gilbert was censured for a hauteur and coldness of manner by people who were slightly acquainted with him; but this censure was founded on appearance more than reality. He did not study the minutiæ of the graces, nor enter easily into conversation with persons of un-

* I heard this remark made by Principal Robertson; and I remember that he specified particularly Sir Gilbert's speech on the proposed extension of the militia to Scotland 1757-8, and on the expulsion of Wilkes.

cultivated taste, or on frivolous subjects. He was himself rigidly temperate, and he did not indulge his guests in that profusion of wine which was then fashionable at gentlemen's tables, and reckoned an essential characteristic of hospitality. And what perhaps still more contributed to Sir Gilbert's unpopularity, he was guarded and shy when applications were made to him for favours, and never encouraged illusive hopes, nor made promises which he did not intend, and think himself able to perform. In more private society, when in the company of a few friends, Sir Gilbert Elliot was affable and condescending more than any person of high station I ever conversed with. In the spring 1768, on the approach of a general election, he came to reside a few weeks in the country, unattended by his family, and having but few visitors, I enjoyed daily opportunities of conversing with him alone. His conversation was always pleasant, and often very interesting. There was no reserve or stateliness in his manner; he spoke to me about passing events with as much frankness as he would have shewn in conversation with any one of his own rank; about those of a political nature, and political men, he was communicative

and explicit, without any tincture of that mystery and self-importance which are often assumed by subaltern politicians.

While I was an inmate in Sir Gilbert Elliot's family I had a partial charge of his two sons, Mr. Elliot, now Lord Minto,* and Mr. Hugh Elliot, at present the oldest diplomatic minister in his Majesty's service. We devoted the morning, and sometimes a few hours after breakfast, to classical reading. Mr. Elliot discovered remarkable sagacity, a sedateness of temper, and a courtesy of manners above his years. Even at that time his superiority was acknowledged by all his acquaintances of his own age. It was more especially pleasing to me that he became a communicant under a serious impression of the truth and excellence of the Christian religion.

The sprightliness and original wit of Hugh Elliot, then a boy, made him a delightful companion, while he possessed talents of a more respectable class — quickness of apprehension, facility and fluency of expression, with a keenness and subtility in debate which would have ensured

* Afterwards Governor-General of India, and in 1813 created Viscount Melgund and Earl of Minto. He was born in 1751, and died in 1814. Mr. Hugh Elliot became Governor of Madras, and a Privy Councillor.—Ed.

his reputation as an orator, if he had had the good fortune to sit in Parliament.

The time allotted to attendance on my pupils, to the composition of my sermons, and other parochial duties, prevented me from pursuing my own literary improvement with so much regularity and perseverance in my new situation, as I had hitherto the opportunity of doing. Impressed with a deep sense of the sacred station in which I was now placed, it was my endeavour to discharge the duties which it imposed with diligence and fidelity. I was regular in visiting the sick, in attending to the circumstances of the poor, and using all the means in my power to mitigate their sufferings. In the performance of the last-mentioned duty, I was encouraged and assisted by the benevolence of Lady Elliot.* I visited or examined all the families in my parish annually. Of many errors in this early period of my ministry I am now sensible. Conscious of the rectitude of my intention, I affected too much a tone of inde-

* Agnes Murray Kynynmound, heiress of Melgund, in Forfarshire, and of Kynynmound, in Fifeshire. Lady Elliot was my distant relation, being the granddaughter of Mr. Hugh Somerville, W.S., second son of Somerville of Corhouse.

pendence, and yielded indiscreetly to the spirit of innovation. I had adopted opinions and views of many controverted theological points different from those which were entertained by the generality of my brethren, and did not make sufficient allowance for the prejudices of education at a time when the minds of students were restrained from that freedom of inquiry and latitude of sentiment with which their successors have been indulged. Nor was I myself untainted with that narrow-mindedness which I professed to abhor. Although I never failed in good manners and all external respect towards my aged brethren, yet my sentiments, avowed in a manner too peremptory, made some of them think less favourably of my dispositions and character than they came to do upon more intimate acquaintance, after the fervour of my youthful zeal had subsided.

The most distinguished person in the Presbytery of Jedburgh when I first became a member of it, was Mr. Robert Riccaltoun,* minister of Hob-

* Author of a *Sober Enquiry into the Grounds of the present Differences in the Church of Scotland* (1723), etc. Three posthumous volumes of his works were printed in 1771-2, and others were announced a few years ago as in course of preparation for the press. Mr. Riccaltoun died in 1769 in his seventy-ninth year.—Ed.

kirk, with whom I had been intimately acquainted from my earliest days, and who survived two years after my ordination at Minto. A large portion of original genius, rather than a cultivated understanding, together with facetious manners, an ample store of observation and anecdotes, and a predilection for the society of young men, characterized him. He was himself a disciple and admirer of Hutchinson, and, corresponding with the philosophy of his master, his theological opinions were wild and mystical. He reprobated the works of Samuel Clarke, Bishop Butler, and all the authors who advocated the cause of natural religion. He asserted that the *Essays* of David Hume, which at that time gave alarm to the learned friends of religion, had done more service to the cause of Christianity, than all the labours of its rational defenders; and that, if Hume would but declare himself a Christian, he would undertake to vindicate his opinions and defend his orthodoxy against all his antagonists, at the bar of the General Assembly.

A benevolent heart, a rich imagination, a taste for what was beautiful and sublime in the works of nature, expressed with simplicity and propriety,

compensated for the obliquity of his systematic aberrations, and procured the affection and esteem of all his intimate acquaintances. He modestly acknowledged to me that he had considerable influence in discovering and prompting the poetical talents of Thomson, who, in his youthful days, had been his frequent visitor—Thomson's father being his neighbour as the minister of the parish of Southdean. He told me that a poem of his own composition, the subject of which was the description of a storm on the adjacent hill of Ruberslaw, suggested to Thomson the idea of expatiating on the same theme, and produced the "Winter," the first and best of Thomson's writings. He repeated to me several passages of his own poem, which I thought beautiful. I have often since regretted that I had not obtained a copy of it; but I was less anxious about doing so then, as he told me that it would be found in a periodical work published at Edinburgh about the beginning of the century—I think he said about the year 1718 or 1719. I have searched many volumes of the pamphlets in the Advocates' Library, but have not been so fortunate as to discover it.* Mr.

* This is obviously the poem entitled "A Winter's Day," printed in

Riccaltoun, in consequence of his having been security for a brother, or near relation, who had failed in his circumstances, and of his being after-

Savage's Miscellany, 1726, and afterwards in the Gentleman's Magazine for May 1740 (vol. x., p. 256), as "written by a Scottish clergyman." The following extracts may serve to shew the style of the *Winter's Day*:—

"Now, gloomy soul! look out—now comes thy turn;
With thee behold all ravag'd nature mourn:
* * * * *
Look out, with joy; the ruler of the day,
Faint as thy hopes, emits a glimmering ray:
Already, exiled to the utmost sky,
Hither, oblique, he turns his clouded eye.
Lo! from the limits of the wintry pole,
Mountainous clouds in rude confusion roll;
In dismal pomp, now hovering on their way,
To a sick twilight they reduce the day.
And hark! imprisoned winds, broke loose, arise,
And roar their haughty triumph through the skies;
While the driv'n clouds, o'ercharged with floods of rain,
And mingled lightning, burst upon the plain;
* * * * *
In this moss-covered cavern, hopeless laid,
On the cold cleft I'll lean my aching head,
And, pleas'd with Winter's waste, unpitying see
All nature in an agony with me!
Rough rugged rocks, wet marshes, ruin'd towers,
Bare trees, brown brakes, bleak heaths, and rushy moors,
Dread floods, huge cataracts, to my pleased eyes,
(Now I can smile) in wild disorder rise."

A number of particulars regarding this poem in its relations to Thomson's *Winter*, will be found in two articles in the Gentleman's Magazine

wards burdened with the maintenance and education of a numerous family of children, continued all his life under the oppression of debt and straitened circumstances.*

for 1853 (New series, vol. xxxix. p. 368; and vol. xl. p. 364). In a letter from Thomson, written about September 1725, and quoted in the articles now referred to, is the following passage:—"Nature delights me in every form; I am just now painting her in her most lugubrious dress. . . . . *Mr. Riccaltoun's poem on Winter, which I still have, first put the design into my head. In it are some masterly strokes that awakened me.*" In this letter the poet also gives the first draft of the opening lines of his Winter, which, as far as they differ from the poem as published, shew more distinctly the influence of the verses of Mr. Riccaltoun:—

> "I sing of Winter and his gelid reign;
> Nor let a rhyming insect of the spring
> Deem it a barren theme. To me 'tis full
> Of manly charms; *to me, who court the shade,*
> *Whom the gay seasons suit not, and who shun*
> *The glare of summer. Welcome! kindred glooms!*
> Drear, awful wintry horrors, welcome all," etc.

The first edition of the Winter was published in 1726. It bears very little resemblance throughout to the subsequent editions of the same poem.—Ed.

* The statements in the Biographies of Thomson as to the nature of the poet's obligations to Mr. Riccaltoun, are, to some extent, inaccurate, and, in particular, it appears certain that Johnson and others are wrong in saying, that, owing to the poverty of Thomson's father, "Mr. Riccaltoun, a neighbouring minister, discovering in him uncommon promises of future excellence, undertook to superintend his education and provide him books." Not only did Mr. Riccaltoun's own worldly circumstances throughout his life make it improbable that he should be of use to young Thomson by pecuniary assistance during his boyhood; but he was in fact not in posses-

I lived on friendly terms with all my brethren in the presbytery, but while at Minto in great intimacy with Mr. Elliot of Cavers, whose modesty and gentle manners rendered him an agreeable companion. His proficiency as a mathematician and astronomer was studiously concealed till the publication of his essay on the Method of taking Observations at Sea.*

After Dr. Charters' settlement at Wilton, I derived great pleasure and important advantages from his conversation and example. He became a member of a society consisting of a few of the younger clergy in this part of the country, which had been formed by my instigation for the purpose of literary conversation and improvement. We met monthly, at the house of one of the members, and delivered discourses in rotation upon some moral or theological subject, and afterwards

sion of the living of Hobkirk till the year 1725—the year Thomson (who was born in 1700) went to London—and though previously a neighbour of Thomson's father, was until that time without any preferment, but depended for his livelihood on the proceeds of a small farm which he occupied in the parish of Southdean.—Ed.

* Mr. Elliot's "New and Improved Method of Taking Observations at Sea," is printed in the first volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He was born in March 1731, and died in February 1808.—Ed.

discussed a question of the same nature announced at the preceding meeting, but the distance of our places of residence, and other circumstances, soon occasioned the dissolution of this society. The members (besides myself) were, Mr. Elliot of Cavers, Dr. Charters, Mr. Maclagan, minister of Melrose; Dr. Douglas,* minister of Galashiels; Mr. Martin, minister of Merton; and Mr. Clerk, minister of Maxton. The vivacity and wit of the last mentioned person made him a delightful companion, but betrayed him into extravagance and imprudences, which embarrassed his fortune, and were followed by a depression of spirits, bad health, and a premature death. As all his relations were at a great distance, I performed, at his deathbed request, the melancholy duty of laying his head in the grave.

* Born 1747, died 1820. The now populous and flourishing manufacturing town of Galashiels was, when Dr. Douglas became minister of that parish in 1770, a small village, with only one slated house besides the manse—no post-office and no bank. By himself becoming their security to the amount of £2000, Dr. Douglas furnished the manufacturers of those days with the funds to enable them to extend their business. For a number of years no bill could be drawn in Galashiels without being countersigned by this public spirited clergyman, to whose disinterested and intelligent efforts the town was also, in many other ways, greatly indebted.—Ed.

During the winter 1767-8, I made a long visit to my friends in Edinburgh. About this time John Brown, an old schoolfellow at Dunse, communicated to me his bold project of becoming the author of a new medical school, in avowed opposition to the system then taught in the University of Edinburgh. His celebrity for a time entitle him to a place in these memoirs, especially as I had the opportunity of a more intimate knowledge of his history and character than most of his acquaintances.

John Brown, or Joannes Brunonius as he called himself, was born at Preston, in the parish of Buncle, in the year 1736. His father, a weaver in poor circumstances, was a Seceder, or adherent to that party which had recently left the Established Church on account of the errors in doctrine, and the corruptions of discipline and manners with which they believed it to be polluted. A conscientious ambition of devoting his son to the service of the good cause, in the office of the ministry, made him comply with John's ardent desire by sending him to the Latin school at Dunse; and after the father's death, it was alleged that the Antiburgher congregation, to which

he belonged, with the same view supported him at school out of their weekly collections. Brown's proficiency was so rapid, and he so far surpassed the attainments of the rest of the scholars, that he soon became the oracle of the school. His sectarian zeal continued unabated for two or three years after his becoming Mr. Cruickshanks' scholar. The synod of Merse and Teviotdale, however, happening to meet at Dunse in 1754, John Brown, prompted by curiosity and the urgency of his companions, was prevailed upon to enter within the walls of the church, and to hear the sermon delivered on that occasion by the Moderator of the synod, thinking perhaps that his transgression was less heinous because committed on a week-day. He was immediately summoned to appear before Mr. White's session,* and admonished and rebuked for the offence he had given to the congregation. I do not recollect whether or not upon this event he immediately broke up all connection with the Seceders, but the final result was a total separation. On going to college in 1756—which he did with the view of studying

* Mr. White, a man of great simplicity of manners, was minister of the Antiburgher congregation at Dunse.

for the church—Brown was more distinguished for his pugilistic exploits than classical accomplishments; the derision excited by his figure, deportment, and dress, all of them strange and eccentric, having at first led to frequent personal *rencontres* with his fellow students. About this time the attention of the literary world began to be attracted by the publication of David Hume's Philosophical Essays, admired for their depth and ingenuity even by many who considered them as alike hurtful to the interests of morality and religion. From being a reader, Brown became an enthusiastic admirer of Hume's philosophy, and to his confidential friends he declared himself a convert to scepticism, from which he never was reclaimed.

In the year 1761 Mr. Elliot of Arkleton being a candidate for a degree in medicine, on my recommendation employed Brown to translate the thesis prescribed as a part of his trial. This task gave a new turn to his views. He began to study medicine, receiving free tickets from the professors, and deriving a comfortable subsistence by giving instructions in Latin to medical students, and by monopolizing the trade of translating the theses of medical probationers. He had the good

fortune to attract the notice and favour of Dr. Cullen,* who employed him as his Latin secretary, and rewarded him liberally for his service. His attachment to Dr. Cullen for a time seemed to exceed the ordinary bounds of gratitude. He never mentioned his name but with admiration and rapture, and would have hazarded his life in defence of his honour. His children—for he had now entered into the married state—were all baptized by the names of Dr. Cullen and his sons and daughters in succession. One of the Medical Chairs happening to become vacant, Brown had conceived that nothing but Dr. Cullen's interest was necessary to secure the appointment to himself; when that was honestly denied him, his vindictive rage against the Doctor was not less extreme than had been his admiration and gratitude; and it was in the attempt, by way of retaliation, to impeach Dr. Cullen's scientific merits, that what is called the Brunonian theory of medicine first took its origin.

The eminence Dr. Brown acquired† as the

* William Cullen, M.D. Born 1712, died 1790. He was at that time Professor of *Materia Medica* in the University of Edinburgh.—Ed.

† In 1777, I happened to meet a number of gentlemen of the medical

originator of a new school did not contribute to the melioration of his fortune, or the improvement of his moral character and domestic happiness. His mind grew inflated, domestic duties and enjoyments were neglected and slighted, his plans of life were fluctuating, arrogant, and chimerical. His circumstances became embarrassed; some of his friends were involved in the consequences of his imprudence and extravagance; and he was reduced to the humiliating experience of imprisonment for debt. Hope, however, never forsook him. After making the last composition with his creditors he removed to London, in full confidence of ascending to the pinnacle of opulence and fame by practising as a physician. He soon after died, and left his widow and children entirely

profession at dinner in London, in the house of Dr. Clerk. No sooner was it known that Dr. Brown was my intimate acquaintance, than a variety of questions relative to his person, character, connections, etc. etc., were addressed to me, indicating a high esteem of his genius and merits on the part of the persons who put them. To the best of my recollection, Dr. Beddoes, who afterwards acquired considerable reputation as an author and practical physician, was particularly inquisitive, and seemed partial to Brown's theory. [Dr. Beddoes edited an edition of the *Elementa Medicinæ*, with a life of the author, published in two volumes, in 1795.] My son told me that he met with a portrait of John Brown in Italy, and that his name and system were often mentioned with applause by foreign physicians.

dependent on the aid of his charitable friends and disciples.

Dr. Brown's literary accomplishments, though brilliant, were confined within a narrow circle. His memory, the great instrument of his proficiency as a scholar, far outstripped his judgment and taste. His fluency, and readiness in the command of his vernacular tongue, were not less extraordinary than his facility in Latin composition. In the Theological Society he used to speak at great length almost on every subject. His thoughts, however, were incoherent, his arguments superficial, and his style loose, diffuse, and inelegant. His errors and irregularities were, alas, but too palpable. His best qualities, and his virtues, were best known only by his most intimate friends. He possessed great courage, both passive and active. He was firm and undaunted under adversity. He never shrunk from danger. Notwithstanding his apparent arrogance and self-sufficiency, he was not independent of the influence of his superiors in understanding, but he also thought for himself, and adhered firmly to those opinions which he had adopted after inquiry and conviction. The most respectable and amiable

feature in Dr. Brown's character was an ardent attachment to his early friends. He was always ready to undertake most laborious services, and to submit to the most disinterested sacrifices, to advance their interest. The constancy of his affection to myself, and the substantial services he rendered me, made it impossible for me to withdraw my regard for him, notwithstanding the irregularity of his conduct, and the wide discordance of our sentiments.

In the year 1769 I made a visit to London. I began my journey on the 28th February, accompanied by my friends Mr. Elliot of Cavers, and Mr. Bowmaker,* to Newcastle, from whence I proceeded in the stage-coach, which at that time was two nights and three days upon the road. The whole expense of the journey did not amount to more than £7, little more than the half of the expense of my last journey to the metropolis in 1800. The three months I spent in London at this time I reflect upon as the most pleasant, and not the least instructive portion of my past life. I was incessantly occupied and incessantly amused. I had frequent access to both Houses of Parlia-

* Robert Bowmaker, D.D., minister of Dunse, who died in 1797.

ment—attended the courts in Westminster Hall—visited many of the coffee-houses resorted to by persons of different ranks and characters. I spent the evenings, when not engaged at private families, either at the theatre or one of the beer-houses, as they were then called, which exhibited diversity of characters, particularly those in lower life. I visited most of the prisons—saw all the curiosities—and resorted to all the interesting places frequented by persons who visit London for the purpose of amusement, and the enlargement of their acquaintance with existing manners.

Nothing could exceed Sir Gilbert Elliot's attention; and it was not only gratifying but useful. He introduced me to several of his literary acquaintances—Dr. Blair,* one of the prebends of Westminster, Dr. Vincent,† master of Westminster school, Dr. Rose of Chiswick,‡ etc. etc. I dined repeatedly with select parties at his house in May-

* John Blair, LL.D., author of *The Chronology and History of the World*. He died in 1782.—Ed.

† Afterwards Dean of Westminster, and the well-known author of *The History of the Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients*. Born 1739, died 1815.—Ed.

‡ One of the earliest writers in the *Monthly Review*, and author of a translation of Sallust. He died about the year 1786.—Ed.

fair. He proposed, as I had seen so much, that I should also see the Court, and had the goodness to carry me along with him on a levee day—not to be introduced, for I had not character to entitle me to that honour. He placed me at the bottom of the Inner Room that I might be a spectator of the ceremony that was passing, and directed me to withdraw, when the king approached, to the place where I had my station. I was, according to his direction, dressed *a la mode*, with a bag wig, ruffles at the wrists of my shirt, and a sword by my side.* This foppish decoration afforded a great deal of fun and merriment to my acquaintances.

I met with kindness more than hospitable from Mr. Strahan,† his Majesty's printer, to whom I had been warmly recommended by my excellent friend Dr. Wishart. I frequently dined at his house, and was particularly flattered by an invitation to make one in the company of a celebrated literary party at a Sunday's dinner. David Hume, Sir John

* The ruffles belonged to David Hume, who had lately returned from the Continent. Mrs. Elliot, with whom he always lodged when in London, was the eldest daughter of Elliot of Midlem Mill, and had carried me to church to be baptized when her father resided at Branxholm as the Duke of Buccleuch's chamberlain.

† Born at Edinburgh 1715, died 1785.

Pringle,* and Dr. Franklin from America, were of the number, and a lady, an intimate friend of Dr. Johnson; and a good deal of the conversation related to him and other literary men. In a private conversation I had one day with Mr. Strahan, after regretting the scanty provision of the Scottish clergy, he warmly recommended to me to think of some scheme of literary employment in London, assuring me of his patronage in such friendly terms as impressed me with a full persuasion of the sincerity of his kind attentions, and of the probability of their leading to flattering success.

I had an invitation from Dr. Rose to dine with him weekly on Friday, his public day, and derived great entertainment from the conversation of his literary friends who made up the party. Dr. Rose had a rich store of anecdotes relative to contemporary authors; and in moral and religious subjects his communications were interesting and impressive. He was an intelligent and sincere Christian. He informed me that the

* President of the Royal Society, and author of *Observations on the Diseases of the Army*, etc. Born at Stitchell House, Roxburghshire, 1707; died in London, 1782. See also *supra*, p. 21, note.—Ed.

clerical profession had been his early choice and destination, and with that view he had completed his university studies at Aberdeen, but that conscientious scruples about signing the formula, an indispensable qualification for obtaining a license, had compelled him reluctantly to abandon the prospect of sustaining the pastoral office in his native country, and to resort to England on the chance of finding employment in literature. He spoke with warm affection of Dr. Doddridge, under whom he had been employed as an usher,* and with admiration of Dr. Foster,† who had a few years before preached weekly at the Old Jewry to crowded audiences, composed not only of dissenters, but members of the church, many of them of high rank, attracted by the liberality of his senti-

* This well-known divine, who was born in 1702, and died in 1751, superintended a theological seminary at Northampton.

† James Foster, D.D., an eminent dissenting minister, born 1697, died 1753. He was the author of *Discourses on Natural Religion*, and other works of acknowledged ability. His theological views, however, were such as to recommend him to the special admiration of the most distinguished free-thinkers of the age in which he lived. It is to this Dr. Foster that Pope refers in the lines—

> "Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
> Ten metropolitans in preaching well."
>
> (*Epil. to the Satires*, Dial. 1.)—Ed.

ments, and the splendour of his eloquence. I was informed by some of my literary acquaintances in London, that Dr. Rose and Dr. Kippis* were the authors of the theological articles in the Monthly Review, and though I did not find myself at liberty to ascertain the fact on Dr. Rose's authority, yet from the strain of his sentiments on the most important topics discussed in these articles, I entertain no doubt of the correctness of my information. To Dr. Rose I was indebted for an introduction to Dr. Price,† with whom I had many pleasant interviews. I preached for him at Newington on the occasion of his dispensing the sacrament. The subject of his discourse was the Wedding Garment, Matthew xxii. 11, which he explained by a reference to Rev. xix. 8. The exhortations founded upon it were in substance the same with those generally introduced in our own church at fencing the tables,‡ previous to the dispensing the sacra-

* Born 1725, died 1795.

† Richard Price, D.D., author of a *Treatise on Reversionary Payments* and other well-known works, political and theological, in the latter of which he supported Arian views. In 1769 he was morning preacher in a dissenting chapel at Newington Green. He died in March 1791.—(Ed.)

‡ *Fencing the tables* is the name given to the exhortation which is addressed to communicants immediately before their taking their seats at the communion table.

ment. The bread and wine were handed by Dr. Price himself to all the communicants sitting in the pews usually occupied by them. The simplicity of Dr. Price's manners, and the sincerity stamped upon every sentence he uttered, gave a peculiar charm to his conversation. I was, however, surprised by a departure from his mildness and gentleness when any subject of a political nature was introduced, such as the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes from the House of Commons, which was at that time a constant topic of discussion in every company. When I mentioned the gross immoralities of Mr. Wilkes rendering him unworthy of popular favour, he said he was a man he could trample under his foot, but the question which he had been the occasion of moving was of such constitutional magnitude, that his private character ought to have no influence on the decision of it. The asperity and boldness of Dr. Price's political sermons on the American war and the French Revolution, exhibit a perfect contrast to that modesty and charitable spirit which pervades all his theological works, and particularly his controversial discourses. Bishop Burnet is another example of the like inconsistency. The doctrinal

points of religion he discusses in his *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles* with such impartiality and fairness, that it is difficult to discover his own private opinion.* In his political and historical works, the misrepresentation and petulance of the partizan are too palpable to escape the notice of his greatest admirers. How are we to account for this strange weakness and inconsistency in human character? It were uncharitable to suppose good men less interested about moral and religious truths than about political dogmas and secular transactions. From what I have experienced in my own temper, I suspect that the heat of dispute becomes more intense where the importance of the propositions which we have espoused, and the arguments by which we defend them, are most doubtful and controvertible.

My situation in London afforded me the most favourable opportunity of being made acquainted with literary men of every description and charac-

* With regard to the work of Bishop Burnet here referred to, it is right to mention that in the year 1701 (May 30), the Lower House of Convocation sent up a complaint to the Archbishop and Bishops against it, for this reason among others, that it was "a book that tended to introduce such a latitude and diversity of opinion as the Articles were framed to avoid."—Ed.

ter. I lodged in the house of Mr. Murdoch, a bookseller, with Gilbert Stuart,* who had just begun his literary career with great eclat. He had published, some time before, a volume on the Origin and Principles of the British Constitution, and had recently written a review of Dr. Robertson's History of Charles V., and he was daily engaged in preparing articles for newspapers and reviews, which he often shewed me before they were sent to the press. Our daily visitors at the house of Mr. Murdoch were, Mr. Miekle,† the author of a translation of the Lusiad; Mons. Du Vergy, a profligate Frenchman, who had been secretary to De Guerchy, and a friend of the celebrated Chevalier d'Eon,‡ and who was writing novels to keep him out of prison; with others of similar characters and circumstances. I met with the same company, and several authors of inferior

* Born 1742, died 1786. For some curious notices of Gilbert Stuart, especially in his connection with the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, see *Kerr's Life of William Smellie*, vol. i., *passim*.—Ed.

† Born 1734, died 1788.

‡ The Count de Guerchy was the French Ambassador Extraordinary in London from 1763 to 1765; D'Eon had been the Charge d'Affaires before his arrival, and had a quarrel with his superior, which gave rise to a trial for libel, in which, according to Horace Walpole, Du Vergy had been implicated. *See Letters to Sir H. Mann*, vol. i., p. 210.—Ed.

note, at the house of Mr. Murray, bookseller,* Fleet Street, to whose attention and civility I was indebted, both for instruction and pleasure. The extravagant self-sufficiency of his guests, their barefaced reciprocal flattery, and the contempt which they expressed for the most esteemed living authors, often provoked my indignation. I speak, however, principally of Gilbert Stuart, to whom the club assigned oracular authority. I was astonished at the effrontery, as well as imprudence, with which he dared to avow a want of all principle and honour. He shewed me two contrasted characters of Alderman Beckford,† the idol of the mob, which he was to insert in the antagonist newspapers most in circulation, one a panegyric, and the other a libel, and for each of which he expected to receive the reward of a guinea. However exceptionable Dr. Stuart's character, it must be acknowledged that he possessed transcen-

* Father of Mr. Murray, now the most eminent bookseller in London, [*i. e.*, in 1813. He was the grandfather of the present Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street.—Ed.]

† He took a conspicuous part on the popular side in the question relating to Mr. Wilkes' expulsion from the House of Commons, as commemorated on the statue erected in his honour in Guildhall. He died in 1770, during his second mayoralty. Alderman Beckford was the father of the author of *Vathek*.—Ed.

dent intellectual talents, a powerful understanding, a penetrating discernment, with a capacity for patient laborious research. But what I most admired, and what was less known, was his facility and quickness in composing—the more extraordinary, because his style has so much the appearance of art and elaboration. I have often seen him, after revelling through the night, without sleep or refreshment, take the pen in his hand, and in a few minutes write out an article for a newspaper or review, which was sent to the press without correction. To me he was friendly, and even flattering. He strenuously urged me to resign my charge at Minto, and to become an associate in the trade of authorship, with warm promises of his interest and patronage. I believe he was sincere, and would have kept his promise, but only so long as I might have acquiesced in a subaltern department. Happening to mention to Sir Gilbert Elliot the literary company with which I associated, he recommended to me never to think of making authorship a profession, because persons, however celebrated for genius and erudition, who devoted themselves entirely to mercenary composition, seldom preserved purity of principle, or

obtained respectability of character. His observation I have seen verified in the fate of several of my acquaintances of this description.

I frequently attended the courts of law, but had not the good fortune to hear Lord Mansfield* speak, of whose eloquence I had formed the highest expectation. Lord Camden,† then Chancellor, was, without exception, not only the most pleasing, but the most masterly speaker, either on the bench or at the bar, at the time of my first visit to London. His elocution was fluent and brilliant, his tone of voice harmonious, and his manner dignified. Mr. Wedderburn was the most elegant speaker at the bar—concise and perspicuous. Mr. Charles York,‡ who was mostly his opponent in the causes in which I had the opportunity of hearing him, was drawling and uninteresting, though I was informed by persons

* Born 1705, died 1793.

† He died April 18, 1794.

‡ A few months after this, the fate of Mr. York excited a great sensation. In consequence of the importunity and flattering address of the king, he was prevailed upon to accept the Chancellorship, which Lord Cambden had resigned. When he communicated this to his friends in opposition, they expressed such indignation, that it threw him into a paroxysm of despondency, which terminated in suicide. He was the son of the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke.

who were competent judges that in argument and legal knowledge he surpassed Mr. Wedderburn. I never heard Mr. Lee* nor Sir Fletcher Norton,† the former, at that time, the most popular lawyer on the side of opposition—the latter, the ministerial champion. In the House of Commons Lord North, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and Governor Johnstone,‡ were esteemed the most accomplished speakers. The most interesting debates turned on the question of the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, which was repeatedly introduced in different forms, and always confirmed by a great majority. I was present at one of these debates, but had not the good fortune to attend on the day Mr. Fox made his first speech in the House of Commons, in defence of the expulsion, but I remember it was mentioned in every company as an extraordinary display of eloquence, and talents for debate, and the more remarkable in a maiden speech, and a person of his early age, for I believe he had not

* "Honest Jack Lee," the counsel for the petitioners against Colonel Luttrel's election. He was Solicitor-General in the Coalition ministry, was appointed Attorney-General in 1784, and died in 1793.—Ed.

† First Lord Grantley; born 1716, died 1789.

‡ Colonel James Johnstone, Lieutenant-Governor of one of the Leeward Islands.—Ed.

then attained his majority.* One of the expressions used by Mr. Fox on that occasion was, that "*he did not know, and never would acknowledge, the voice of the people of England without the walls of the House of Commons.*" But it was not by his eloquence alone that Mr. Fox combated Mr. Wilkes and his partizans. He accompanied the rival candidate, Colonel Luttrel, to Brentford, in defiance of personal insults and danger, and stood by his side on the hustings, acting the part of an intrepid chivalrous knight in the ministerial cause. Mr. Fox's panegyrists overlook these and

* "Mr. Fox was returned for Midhurst in the parliament which met on the 10th May 1768. . . . . His first speech appears, from Sir Henry Cavendish's debates, to have been made on the 9th March 1769, when he was little more than twenty years old. He spoke again on the 14th April, and a third time on the 8th May. His first speech seems to have been nothing more than a few words on a point of order; his second was in support of the expulsion of Wilkes. . . . . Horace Walpole alludes in terms of qualified praise to the second, in his account of the debates of the 14th and 15th April. 'Charles Fox, with infinite superiority in parts, was not inferior to his brother [Stephen Fox] in insolence.' . . . . To this speech his father, Lord Holland, alludes in a letter to Mr. Campbell of Cawder, with the partiality perhaps of a parent, but which the extorted praise of Horace Walpole goes far to justify:—'I am told that few in parliament ever spoke better than Charles did on Tuesday,—offhand, with rapidity, with spirit, and such knowledge of what he was talking of, as surprised everybody in so young a man.'"—*Memorials and Correspondence of C. J. Fox, by* Lord John Russell, vol. i., pp. 51-52.

other subsequent facts of a similar nature in the early stages of his political career, and begin his history with his opposition to the American war, in order to conceal the fluctuation and versatility of his political conduct.

With respect to the legality of the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, after a calm dispassionate review of the question, I still maintain the same opinion that I did at the time of its being agitated,—that the authority or right of expulsion being once admitted, which was denied by no party, it would be a political solecism to suppose that they had not the power of making that expulsion effectual.

I occasionally attended the religious meetings of different persuasions, and heard most of the admired preachers. I was often highly gratified, but saw no reason for preferring any of them to those I had been accustomed to hear in Edinburgh. The best sermon I heard when in London was delivered by Dr. Lowth, then Bishop of Oxford,* on Galatians vi. 8. His manner was grave

* Afterwards of London; the author of *Lectures on the Poetry of the Hebrews*, and a *Translation of the Prophet Isaiah*; born in 1710, and died in 1787.—Ed.

and solemn, his style perspicuous, pure, and nervous. Dr. Fordyce* was undoubtedly an eloquent preacher, but his delivery too pompous and theatrical. His congregation was then numerous and genteel, but I found he was declining from the zenith of popular fame. His conversation was animated and instructive, expressive of ardent piety, and an enthusiastic zeal for virtue. The unfortunate Dr. Dodd† was one of the most popular preachers, and attracted crowded assemblies at the Queen's Chapel, and the Magdalen in Goodmansfields, where he preached on the Sunday evenings. His sentiments were orthodox, occasionally pathetic, but oftener bombastic, and his

* Originally a minister in Scotland, afterwards of a Presbyterian chapel in Monkwell Street, London. He is still known by his *Discourses to Young Women*, and *Addresses to Young Men*. Dr. Fordyce died in 1796, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.—Ed.

† Dr. William Dodd, a prebendary of Brecon, and chaplain to the king; the author of a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, in 3 vols. folio, and of many other works, and a popular preacher, but equally remarkable for his expensive habits. He was convicted of forging a bond for £4200 in the name of Lord Chesterfield, to whom he had been tutor, and executed at Tyburn, June 27, 1777. Amongst many others, Dr. S. Johnson zealously interposed to procure a pardon, and otherwise interested himself in the fate of this unhappy man (see Boswell, vol. vi., pp. 275-287), who preached his last sermon in the Magdalen only two days before the date of the forgery, for which he forfeited his life.—Ed.

style turgid. The pertness of his address, his apparent self-sufficiency and vanity, and the grossness of the details which he introduced in his address to the Magdalens, must have been alike offensive to most of his hearers. The Jewish Synagogue allured the attendance of strangers, chiefly by means of the excellency of the performers in vocal music. I ascribed to the same cause the crowded audience of Mr. Madan,* though his doctrine was calvinistical and popular. Mr. Romaines'† audience, Fleet Street, was so large, that the greater number were under the necessity of standing during the time of his delivering a sermon of an immoderate length, which, from what I heard, indistinctly and partially, appeared dry, mystical, and obscure. I preached during my stay in London for Mr. Oswald, Tavistock Street; Mr. Isaac Davison, Ratcliffe Highway; Dr. Fordyce, and Dr. Price, and was a communicant

* The Rev. Martin Madan (born 1726, died 1790), chaplain to the Lock Hospital, Harrow Road, Westbourne Green, and author of several theological and controversial works, including a treatise, entitled *Thelyphthora* (1780-81), in which he justified polygamy.—Ed.

† Rector of St. Andrews, and of St. Ann's, Blackfriars, and author of an often reprinted treatise on *The Life of Faith*, etc.; born 1714, died 1795.—Ed.

with the last, who dispensed the sacrament, as already observed, on the day I happened to serve him.

The theatre was the richest source of my amusement in London. I saw Garrick* in the characters of Don Felix, Archer, Ranger, and Lusingham. My curiosity and expectation, wound up to the highest pitch, were fully gratified. The encomiastic descriptions I had heard from his fondest and most judicious admirers, and which I had suspected of exaggeration, now appeared to be no more than a fair testimony to his transcendent merit. The epilogue, composed by him and addressed to the audience in behalf of distressed actors, for whose benefit the Beaux Stratagem was performed, displayed an epitome of the extent of his genius, and the universality of his powers. All the diversity of his principal characters, in tragedy and comedy, were cursorily portrayed by suitable tones, and gestures, and looks, but so different and unlike, that one was almost betrayed into a momentary belief of a change of person. If I had stood behind the scenes, the voice was so varied, that I could not have believed

* Born 1716, died 1779.

it to have been uttered by the same person. How much did I regret that I had not seen him at full length in these characters!

Mr. Love, formerly manager of the Edinburgh play-house, and at this time one of the company at Drury Lane, whom I had frequently met at dinner at Lord Somerville's, had the kindness to secure for me six places in the pit as often as Mr. Garrick performed, which happened to be only four nights during the three months of my residence in London. He had spent the winter at Bath, on account of his declining health. As the house was immensely crowded, I was enabled, by Mr. Love's courtesy, to gratify the curiosity, and minister to the amusement of several of my country acquaintances. I shall never forget the exquisite pleasure I felt in having it thus in my power to offer Miss Charters, afterwards my beloved wife, a place by my side on the occasion of Garrick's appearing in the character of Lusingham, in Zara, and delivering the epilogue already mentioned.

The most important event that ever happened to me was also one of the most accidental. Miss Charters, of whom, though the cousin of my most intimate friend, I had seen very little previously,

was, along with her father, at this time on a visit to General Williams; but nothing could be more unexpected than our first meeting in London. I like to recall the circumstances. I was on my way to Westminster Hall on the 21st of April, on the occasion of the king's attending the House of Peers, and had been overtaken by the royal coach, and the mob which pressed round it hissing and bawling "Wilkes and liberty," when, to my surprise, I recognized Mr. Charters and his daughter among the spectators. I was happy to meet with friends who sympathized with the indignation I myself felt at the conduct of the crowd, and with my admiration of the king's intrepid bearing; and it gave me pleasure to accept an invitation to accompany them in their carriage to Greenwich, where they had arranged to spend the day, and return to the house of General Williams to dinner. From that time, the most delightful hours I spent in London were passed in the society of one whose good sense, cultivated taste, and frank and unaffected manners, every day gained more and more upon my affections.

Among the sights of the metropolis which I saw, but have not yet mentioned, were the

Exhibitions of pictures,* and the model of Paris. I was very much entertained with the variety of amusements at Vauxhall, more even than with the brilliant company and splendid embellishments of Ranaleigh. I made excursions to Richmond, Hampton, and other places with my friends. I spent part of a day in the King's Bench with a jovial company of prisoners, who seemed to be not only in a comfortable state, but living in luxury. Mr. Wilkes lodged in a commodious house detached from the rooms occupied by the rest of the prisoners; and his table was daily furnished with the most rare and costly delicacies, presented to him by his admirers. I could not repress the curiosity of being a spectator of one of the most painful and repulsive scenes of London life. After being a witness to the execution of two criminals at Tyburn, I cannot entertain any doubt of the impropriety and pernicious effects of the publicity of punishment for atrocious crimes. Among the immense multi-

* From the author's memorandum book, there seem to have been at least two such exhibitions in 1769. Horace Walpole mentions three in 1770, and says, "the rage to see them is so great, that sometimes one cannot pass through the streets where they are."—*Walpole's Letters to Sir H. Mann*, vol. ii., p. 97.—Ed.

tude of spectators, accommodated according to their rank and payment—some at windows, some upon carts, thousands standing and jostling one another on the surrounding fields—my conviction is that, in a moral view, a greater number were made worse than better by the awful spectacle. Of the ragamuffin class, a large proportion seemed gratified by the sight; and, within my hearing, many expressed their admiration of the fortitude, as they termed the hardiness and stupidity, of one of the sufferers. "Well done, little coiner!" "What a brave fellow he is!" with many other expressions of gross, perverted applause, were repeated, both on the spot, and on the return through Oxford Road. There is something in the parade of a public execution, which not only varnishes disgrace, but dazzles and captivates debased minds. I have had frequent occasion to observe, in the course of my experience, that the notoriety of crimes conduces to the repetition of them. The very mention and description of crimes of singular atrocity rouses a desperate emulation, and emboldens the enterprise of congenial depravity.

I left London on the 25th of May. Mr.

Donaldson, the bookseller,* being informed of my intended journey, called upon me, and, after expressions of kindness, told me that he had it in his power to obtain for me a free and safe conveyance to Edinburgh, on the condition of my taking the charge of a valuable parcel to be sent there in a few days. I accepted this offer, which appeared to me so seasonable, with my best thanks; but how much was I surprised when, upon my arrival in the city on the day I was to begin my journey, the value of the parcel committed to my care was made known to me, and a pair of loaded pistols put into my hands for defending it, with a paper of instructions relative to the plan of my journey! The parcel was a portmanteau covering a chest, which contained eight or ten thousand guineas for the old Bank of Scotland. The substance of the directions given me was, to write twice every day while on the road to Mr. Innes, Edinburgh, and Mr. Hender-

* Alexander Donaldson, who, chiefly by cheap reprints of books of which the copyright had recently expired, made a large fortune, not, as was then held, very creditably. (See Chambers' *Traditions of Edinburgh*, and Boswell's *Johnson*.) His son, James Donaldson, inherited and greatly added to the wealth thus acquired, of which he left £240,000, to found what is now called Donaldson's Hospital in Edinburgh.—Ed.

son, London—to make only a short stop at every stage—not to travel after eight o'clock in the evening—not to lodge during the night in any of the large towns—never to lose sight of the portmanteau, to be deposited in my bed-room, and the door to be locked.* When I expressed my unfitness for the trust committed to me, and my regret for having undertaken it, I was informed that I should have

* The following is a copy of the route and instructions with which I was furnished :—

	Miles.	*25th May 1769.*
"From London to Barnett . .	12	
Hatfield . .	9	
Stevenage . .	12	
Biggleswade .	14	
Budgen . .	16	
Stilton . .	14	
Stamford . .	14	
Witham Common	11	
Grantham . .	10	
Newark . .	14	
Taxford . .	14	
Barnaby Moor .	14	
Doncaster . .	14	Between Doncaster and
Ferrybridge . .	15	Ferrybridge is a very
Weatherby . .	16	steep hill, which it is
Bourroughbridge .	12	better to walk up, for
Northallerton .	19	fear of the traces giving
Darlington . .	15	way.
Durham . .	18	
Newcastle . .	15	It is now best to walk
Morpeth . .	14	down the steep hill

a guard to attend me for the first forty miles from London.

My journey was not by any means an agreeable one. Apprehensions of personal danger were revived at every stage of my route; for as the weight of the parcel required the exertion of two porters to remove it from one carriage to another, the nature and value of the contents were palpable, not only to the bearers, but to the many idle hangers-on, often of suspicious aspect, always to

Whittengam .	19	going in to Newcastle,
Woollerhaughead .	11	and if there is a drag-
Cornhill . .	14	chain to the chaise, to
Greenlaw . .	12	'cause the driver fix it.
Norton Moor .	12	
Blackshiels . .	10	
Edinburgh . .	14	
	385	

"It is requested that you keep the portmanteau always in sight, and have it in the room where you sleep, which it would be proper were a two-bedded one. Please to write from Stilton, from Doncaster, Northallerton, Morpeth, and Edinburgh, or so calculate it that we may receive a line by each London post you meet on the road. When you arrive at Edinburgh, please drive to the bottom of the Fishmarket Closs; and if one of you will be at the trouble to step up the closs to the Royal Bank, and acquaint Mr. Campbell or Mr. Innes, the cashiers, of your having a portmanteau for the bank from William Tod & Co., of London, they will send two porters with you to bring it up. Please leave the pistols at Arbuthnot and Guthrie's, in the Exchange."

be found about the gates and stable-yards of inns, and who did not spare their jeering but significant remarks on the subject—as, "I wish to God, Jack, you and I had a corner of this box;" "The gentleman has need to be well armed." The landlords, too, cursed and complained of the weight of the clandestine burden, endangering the bottom of their carriages; and, in order to pacify them, I was under the necessity of driving with four horses in some of the long stages. Haunted with dreams of robbery and assassination, I enjoyed no quiet refreshing sleep between London and Edinburgh.

I arrived in the Bank Close at one o'clock, 29th May, and delivered my parcel safe to Mr. Innes* at the expected hour. Of twenty guineas allowed for the expenses of my journey, one remained in my pocket. It was the last day of the General Assembly; and I had the good fortune to find Walter Young and a few other old companions, whom I treated with a dinner and claret, experiencing that elasticity of spirit which follows deliverance from recent fear and danger, heightened by the hilarity of an unexpected and joyous meeting with my friends.

* Cashier of the Bank of Scotland.

CHAPTER IV.

1769-1779.

ON the 5th of June 1770, I was married to Miss Martha Charters, the daughter of Mr. Samuel Charters, Solicitor of the Customs in Scotland. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Charters of Wilton, the cousin of the bride; and followed, as was then the custom, by a supper to the large party of friends who had been invited for the occasion.

In the month of August Dr. Blair accompanied Mr. Charters on a visit to Minto. He had a few weeks before lost his only child, Miss Blair, a young lady highly accomplished, and the darling of her parents. She was of the same age with my wife, and her most intimate confidential friend. The effect of this mournful event on Dr. Blair's health and spirits made it necessary that he

should retire for some time from social intercourse and professional labour, and it was proposed that Mr. Charters and I should accompany him on a jaunt to the west of England. In the progress of our journey we visited Carlisle, Penrith, etc., attended to such objects as appeared attractive and amusing, and were, above all, delighted with the wild romantic grandeur of Keswick, which was the boundary of our excursion. I had been but slightly acquainted with Dr. Blair during my residence in Edinburgh; but from this period I cultivated an intimate correspondence with him, and enjoyed much of his confidence and friendship.

From the inferior income of the stipend of Minto, there appeared a necessity for the immediate exertions of my friends to procure a more remunerative appointment. Sir Gilbert Elliot declined interfering in my behalf for the presentation to the West Kirk, after the death of Mr. Gibson in 1772, but soon removed any suspicion of his friendly disposition to me, by securing the succession to Jedburgh, upon the probable event of Dr. Macknight* going to Edinburgh.

* James Macknight, D.D., born 1721, died 1800; the author of a *Harmony of the Four Gospels*, etc.—Ed.

My translation to Jedburgh was considered an instance of singular good fortune. The situation was healthy and pleasant, the stipend the largest in the presbytery, and, though the parish was extensive and populous, yet, from the number of Dissenters, the duties were not at that time more burdensome than in most of the country parishes in the vicinity.

A short account of the ecclesiastical state of the parish of Jedburgh at the time of my admission may be here given, because Jedburgh was in some sense the fountain head of innovations, which have been since extended to a great proportion of all the parishes in Scotland.

After the death of a former minister, Mr. Winchester (18th September 1755), the magistrates of the burgh, supported by several of the smaller heritors, and most of the heads of families or householders, united in declaring their choice of Mr. Boston* to be their minister, and application was made, through persons of different political

* Minister of Oxnam, near Jedburgh; born 1713, died 1767. He was the youngest son of Thomas Boston of Ettrick, the author of *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*, and other works which have long enjoyed a wide circulation in Scotland.—Ed.

interests, to obtain the royal presentation in his favour. The Marquis of Lothian,* however, piqued by a recent instance of personal rudeness on the part of Mr. Boston, and offended by the revolt of the leading members in the Town Council, who were now conspiring to undermine his influence in the burgh, procured the presentation for Mr. Bonar, the minister of Cockpen, one of the most popular preachers in the Church, and therefore deemed the fittest to rival Mr. Boston, and to diminish the number of his adherents. This measure, instead of softening the temper, or suspending the opposition of the parishioners of Jedburgh, increased their violence, and was made a handle for the complete subversion of the Marquis of Lothian's influence in the affairs of the town. Mr. Bonar having the prospect of a call to Perth (which he afterwards accepted), resigned the presentation to Jedburgh, and Lord Breadalbane, with the consent of the Marquis of Lothian, obtained a presentation in favour of Mr. Douglas,†

* William Henry, fourth Marquis, who died in the year 1775.

† Mr. Douglas is said to have owed his presentation to Jedburgh to his successful exertions to prevent his parishioners at Kenmore from joining the Pretender in 1745. A story is told in connection with this circumstance which is much to his honour. He had been introduced to

minister of Kenmore. The magistrates of Jedburgh had now declared their resolution to oppose the settlement of any presentee, whatever his character and merit, with the exception of Mr. Boston; and two objections to the presbytery's proceeding in the settlement of Mr. Douglas were urged, with some colour of reason and of legal authority. From the lapse of time which had intervened between Mr. Winchester's death and the date of Mr. Douglas' presentation, it was asserted that the *jus devolutum* had taken place, and that the right of supplying the vacancy was now vested in the presbytery. The second objection to Mr. Douglas' settlement was personal, and more specious. He was disqualified by an Act of Assembly, which, though occasionally violated, had never been repealed, expressly prohibiting the removal to the lowlands of any minister

the Duke of Cumberland as a man who had done the state some service, and the Duke promised to take the first opportunity of rewarding him. A short time afterwards, hearing that two or three men belonging to his parish had been seized with arms in their hands, and were about to be executed, Mr. Douglas rode to the Duke's head-quarters—a distance of more than twenty miles—to remind him of his promise, offering to abandon any personal claim on his favour, if the men's lives were spared. According to the tradition, he succeeded in his object after an obstinate struggle, and was not himself a loser by his generosity.—Ed.

"having Irish" or Gaelic, already settled in a Highland parish.* Both these objections having been repelled, and Mr. Douglas' admission ordained by the General Assembly, 28th July 1758, no hope remained of Mr. Boston's becoming minister of Jedburgh, in conformity with the established constitution of the Church of Scotland.

Mr. Boston had uniformly expressed his disapprobation of the different sects of Seceders, and had attacked their principles and conduct with great acrimony, in a sermon delivered at a synodical meeting. He could not, therefore, consistently with his avowed opinions, connect himself with any of the Dissenting communities then existing. Anxious to disclaim the odious imputation of schism, he professed his desire to continue in communion with such of his brethren in the Established Church as were acceptable to their congregations, and had been ordained after having obtained a call from the majority of their parishioners. He declared it to be his sole object to give relief to oppressed congregations, that is, such congregations as could not conscientiously submit to the ministerial functions of the incumbent im-

* Acts of Assembly, 1711 (Act 11) and 1726, (Act 9).

posed upon them by the arbitrary authority of a presentation. Mr. Boston fixed on this point as the only ground of separation from the Church, and, in vindication of his acceptance of a call, nearly unanimous, to exercise the ministerial office in the parish of Jedburgh. He communicated his views to Mr. Gillespie, the deposed minister of Carnock,* who had continued to preach and discharge the ordinary ministerial duties at Dunfermline, in an isolated position—even without any associate, on the solemn occasion of dispensing the sacrament—acquiesced in Mr. Boston's proposal, and admitted him (7th December 1755), according to the usual forms of the Church of Scotland, to be minister of the "Relief congregation" in the parish of Jedburgh.

In consequence of the circumstances now recited, a spirit of rancour against the Established Church, and against the neighbouring ministers, prevailed generally in the parish of Jedburgh during the incumbency of Mr. Douglas, the immediate successor of Mr. Winchester; and the magistrates shamefully prostituted their authority to render his situation unpleasant, by wanton con-

* See before, p. 85.

tinuous litigation, and disrespectful behaviour towards him. His success in every legal point disputed, his uncommon prudence and agreeable manners, and the death of Mr. Boston, had a visible effect in blunting the edge of popular opposition, and restoring the good temper of the parish previous to Mr. Douglas' death, which happened two years after that of Mr. Boston.* The succession (1769) of Dr. Macknight, who had obtained a high reputation for theological literature, reclaimed several families from the Secession, and restored the respectability of the congregation. A few of them apostatized again on my admission; so that my ordinary hearers were not numerous. I never resorted to any mean artifices to court popularity. I made no change in the tenor of my sentiments, nor the style of my composition and manner of delivery, except submitting to the drudgery of repeating my sermons instead of reading them. In my ordinary course of preaching I stated and explained what I believed, after conscientious study, to be the simple and genuine doctrines of the gospel, and insisted largely and

* Mr. Boston died in the year 1767. Mr. Douglas in November 1769.

most frequently on practical subjects. I was diligent in the performance of all the other pastoral duties, as expressed in a preceding part of these memoirs.* I formed a resolution, to which I steadily adhered, of making no distinction in social intercourse between the families of the Dissenters and those of my own congregation. Though this rule of conduct was not approved of by many of the latter description, yet the propriety of it has been evinced by my experience; as it has conduced, according to my expectation, to efface gradually those prejudices which might have disturbed my personal tranquillity, and limited and obstructed my public usefulness.

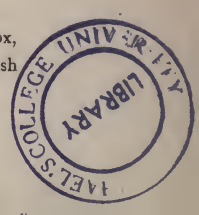
The second summer after my admission to Jedburgh, Mr. Charters, my father-in-law, was advised by his physicians to spend a few weeks at Harrogate on account of the state of his health; and he was kind enough to ask me to accompany him. We had a pleasant tour by Carlisle, Appleby, Brough, Greta, Catterick, and Ripon, and fixed our lodgings at the Salutation Inn, Upper Harrogate, where there was a genteel but not a numerous company. During our stay we made occasional

* *Supra*, p. 126.

excursions to the most noted gentlemen's seats in West Yorkshire. Hackfall and Studley Park are both of them monuments of the good taste and magnificence of Mr. Aislaby.* We visited Harewood, Frogden, Leeds. In the end of July we set out for Scarborough, and stayed the first night at the inn near Howard Castle, that we might have the opportunity of visiting that celebrated spot, which, in grandeur, extent, and variety of artificial embellishments, surpassed any of the pleasure-grounds I had seen before. At Scarborough we spent two days with Dr. Knox, one of the army physicians, and a cousin of Mr. Charters.† From thence we returned to Scotland by Whitby and Robin Hood's Bay—the most sterile, dreary region I ever traversed. At Gisborough, the country begins to wear a more cultivated, pleasing aspect. We spent a night at Stockton, one of the neatest towns in the north of England, and were charmed with the

* John Aislaby, Esq., who was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1718 to 1720, and for his concern in the South Sea Scheme was subjected to large forfeitures, and expelled the House of Commons. He died in 1742. For an account of Harrogate and its neighbourhood in 1773, see Pennant's *Tour from Allston Moor*.—Ed.

† Mr. Charters' mother was Margaret Knox, a daughter of Dr. Knox, a physician in Edinburgh, and a great-great-grandniece of the Scottish reformer.



richness, variety, and beauty of the country from thence to Durham. We were delighted in this part of our journey with a view of the gardens of Hardwicke, in the vicinity of Sedgefield, and hospitably entertained at Durham by Dr. Douglas* of Cavers, one of the prebends, who shewed us the library, and curiosities of the palace, and pointed out the romantic beauties surrounding the city.

In the spring of 1776 (March 24) I met with a heavy and unexpected stroke of affliction, by the death of my excellent friend Mr. Dickson, minister of Whittingham. Returning late in the evening from the house of a neighbouring clergyman, where he had been engaged in the performance of a friendly service, he was thrown from his horse, and killed, as was supposed, on the spot. The body was not found till the morning of the succeeding day. The news of this event overwhelmed me with sorrow. I loved Mr. Dickson both with a filial and brotherly affection. In our orphan state he was a parent to me and my sisters; and, after I advanced in life, a friendship subsisted between us as intimate, and an affection as cordial, as if we had been of the same age and family.

* Died 1780.

Sir Gilbert Elliot, whose health had been for a long time in a declining state, died in the south of France, December 1777. His eldest son, the present Lord Minto, was elected the representative of the county without opposition, but, on the approaching dissolution of Parliament, 1780, Lord Robert Ker, brother of the Duke of Roxburghe,* declared himself a candidate for the suffrages of the freeholders. There had been no contest in the county during the preceding twenty years. The Duke of Buccleuch† espoused the interest of Sir Gilbert Elliot, and the Duke of Roxburghe, naturally, that of his brother; and as both were friendly to the existing administration, the contest that ensued was understood as originating in family rivalry. It was foreseen that the votes would run near, and great exertions were made by the friends and dependants of both the families, and several new voters brought on the roll by the transfer of superiorities, or what were truly called fictitious votes. In the beginning of the contest Sir Gilbert Elliot made me the offer of a superiority, which I declined without a moment's hesitation, as I had

* John, third Duke of Roxburghe, who died in 1804.

† Born 1747, died 1812.

done a year before when Lord Somerville intimated his intention of conferring the same privilege, merely for the purpose of making it subservient to my own personal interest. I was so sincerely attached to Sir Gilbert Elliot, that the means of serving him would have been a more cogent motive for compliance with his desire than any prospect of advantage to myself. But the trust oath was an insurmountable obstacle to the gratification of my wishes.*

I had long felt a strong desire to make a visit to my sisters in London. Mr. Maclagan, minister at Melrose, arranged to accompany me. We set out for Newcastle, March 1779, whence we took places in the coach to York, and spent a busy Sabbath there; for we attended the cathedral, the Methodist meeting, and the dissenting congregation. At the last we heard an affecting discourse on Divine goodness, delivered by Dr. Cappe.† On the

* I felt that I could not consistently with truth, or without the guilt of perjury, take the oath by which the elector declares that "the lands and estate for which he claims a right to vote, do really and truly belong to him, and is his own proper estate; that it is a true and real estate vested in him for his own use and benefit, and for the use of no other person whatever; and that this is the truth, as he shall answer to God."

† The Rev. Newcome Cappe, born 1733, died 1800.

Monday we proceeded in the stage-coach to London, where we arrived in the evening of the following day. My journey was at the outset the occasion of an introduction to a new scene in London life.

One of our travelling companions, whose behaviour had excited various conjectures in the course of our journey, was apprehended at the Bank of England the day after our arrival on the charge of forgery. He had, in fact, forged and circulated the notes of the bank to a very large amount. He was carried before Sir John Fielding,* who in a few hours discovered the lodgings of the several persons who had places in the York coach along with the suspected forger. I happened to be in the gallery of the House of Commons when one of Sir John's officers arrived at my sister's house in Panton Square, requiring my immediate attendance at the Police Office; and it was not without entreaty that the messenger was prevailed upon to desist from his purpose of following me to the House, upon the condition of one of my

* Sir John Fielding succeeded his more celebrated brother, the novelist, as Justice for Westminster, in 1754, and died in 1780. He was blind from his youth—a circumstance to which there is an allusion in the text.—Ed.

friends becoming security for my attendance in Catherine Street at eight o'clock next morning. The prisoner had during the night made an attempt to escape by leaping from the window of the room where he was confined; and having failed in this attempt, his resolution forsook him, and he made a voluntary confession of his guilt in the presence of Sir John Fielding, a few minutes before my arrival. Sir John, when informed of my being a minister of the Church of Scotland, desired me to retire with the culprit, whose name was Mathewson, to the adjoining chapel, and give him admonitions suitable to his unfortunate situation. In consequence of my advice, he made a more ample confession on returning to the bar. The circumstances which he added to his former confession were not, however, injurious to himself, otherwise I should not have urged him to mention them, but such as I thought could not be concealed consistently with the sincerity of that repentance which he now professed.

I was so much amused and interested with the appearance of Sir John Fielding, and the singular adroitness with which he conducted the business of his office, that I continued there for an hour

after the removal of Mathewson, while Sir John was engaged in the investigation of other cases. Sir John had a bandage over his eyes, and held a little switch or rod in his hand, waving it before him as he descended from the bench. The sagacity he discovered in the questions he put to the witnesses, and a marked and successful attention as I conceived, not only to the words, but to the accents and tones of the speaker, supplied the advantage which is usually rendered by the eye; and his skilful arrangement of the questions leading to the detection of concealed facts, impressed me with the highest respect for his singular ability as a police magistrate. This testimony I give not merely on the observation I had the opportunity of making on the day of my appearance before him. I frequently afterwards gratified my curiosity by stepping into Sir John Fielding's office when I happened to pass near Catherine Street.

The accidental circumstance of my having been his fellow-traveller to London, gave me some interest in Mathewson, who, before his being removed from the office of Sir John Fielding, had addressed me in the most pathetic and earnest language, beseeching me to condescend to visit

him in prison. I first saw him again in Clerkenwell, where he was committed till the term of the Old Bailey sessions. The hardened, ferocious countenances of the multitude of felons all in the same apartment, the indecency and profaneness of their conversation, and the looks of derision which they cast upon me, awakened sensations of horror more than of pity, and made me request to be relieved from the repetition of this painful duty. I did not therefore return to Clerkenwell; but after Mathewson's trial and a few days before his execution (for he was executed), I made him a visit in Newgate. There I found him sitting in the condemned hold, with two other criminals under sentence of death. I requested the officer who superintended this department to permit me to retire with Mathewson to a private room, where he entered into a detailed confession of his guilt.

Mathewson, at our interview in Sir John Fielding's office, made known to me a circumstance which he thought gave him a strong claim to my humane services. He told me that his father had for a long time been in the service of Lord Minto,* the Lord Justice-Clerk, and that he had been after-

* Born 1651, died 1718.

wards patronised by his Lordship and all his family on account of his diligence and fidelity. He had heard my name mentioned at the inn at Newcastle, a circumstance which determined him to take a place in the same coach; and, indeed, I had observed that he officiously clung to me in the progress of our journey. He attended Mr. Maclagan and me to the play-house on Saturday evening after our arrival at York, to the cathedral service on Sunday morning, and to Dr. Cappe's chapel in the afternoon—though, on account of his suspicious appearance, and the petulance of his manner, we gave him broad hints of our inclination to dispense with his company; and we were not a little surprised to find him seated in the stage-coach next morning, as, on our way from Newcastle, he had told us that he was to go no farther than York.

My stay in London during my second visit in 1779, though not so much enlivened by the sight of new objects, and therefore less amusing, was highly gratifying to me. Our family party was always pleasant, and our enjoyment independent of visitors or amusements abroad. I made a few delightful excursions with my friend Dr. Hunter, who was now pastor of the church in London Wall.

During my residence in London at this time, too, I renewed my acquaintance with Dr. Rose, Dr. Kippis, and the other literary gentlemen to whom I had been formerly introduced. I preached for Dr. Fordyce, and was sorry to find his congregation on the decrease. I was hospitably entertained at his lodgings in the City, and afterwards at Putney, when his brother, in the medical profession, made one of the company, and contributed to our agreeable entertainment by a store of anecdotes he had picked up in a tour on the Continent, from whence he had lately returned.

The political questions which chiefly engaged the attention of Parliament in the session of 1779, related to the conduct of the American war. I attended the House of Commons when General Grey and some of the principal commanders were examined, and was provoked by the unnatural eagerness of the party in opposition in espousing the cause of our enemies. Even some of those individuals, who a few years before had appeared the most strenuous advocates in support of the right of the British Parliament to impose a tax on the colonies, declaimed against the expediency and justice of the American war. The fatal issue

of that contest has since superseded all argument on these points. The American war is now condemned and execrated by those who lament its calamitous effects, without any retrospect to the motives, the feelings, and the justifiable grounds of entering into it, which produced almost a unanimity of national sentiment at the time of its commencement. Persons of my own age, who were wont, as I well remember, to express themselves with a passionate zeal on this subject, and who considered all those who held a different opinion the tools of faction and abettors of rebellion, have not only changed their sentiments, but seem to have forgotten them as much as if they had lost all sense of personal identity.

The generality of future historians will probably condemn the ministry who began the war with America. They will not make sufficient allowance for local and temporary circumstances, the force of which it is impossible for any person who was not then on the spot to conceive. After the repeal of the Stamp Act, instead of a grateful acknowledgment of the amicable concessions of the British legislature, new complaints of grievances were brought forward, and the most dangerous

combinations formed to excite a spirit of insubordination, and a contempt and hatred of the parent country. The servants of government in every station, civil and military, and all who professed attachment to the established authorities, were exposed to insults and personal danger. Disaffection was every day gathering strength, and at last burst out into tumultuary violence. The most outrageous destruction of property, committed by a furious multitude, was hailed and applauded by the general voice. Indemnity to individuals who suffered by the destruction of their property was obstinately refused. The power of Great Britain was set at defiance. The patience and dilatory forbearance of the parent country was at last exhausted. A sense of justice and patriotism roused the spirit of the nation, and, with the exception of a few individuals who pretended to superior political sagacity, and such as had personal interest in American commerce, the voice of the people at large called for a vindication of the honour, the rights, and the authority of the British empire. No alternative now remained but war or acknowledging the independence of America. But what minister could have dared to hazard the

adoption of the latter alternative? When the final step was taken, few dissenting voices were found in the legislative body; and most of the members who originally opposed the tax on America, became strenuous advocates for enforcing the decision of the British Parliament. There does not perhaps occur in the annals of Britain a single instance of a war more popular at its commencement than that which fatally took place between Great Britain and her colonies.

Admitting the illegality and inexpediency of the American war, it will be difficult to ascertain who the persons were to whom censure ought to be attached, or to decide to whom the greatest share of guilt ought to be apportioned—whether to Mr. Grenville, who introduced the Stamp Act; or to the Marquis of Rockingham who repealed it and substituted the Declaratory Statute; or to the Duke of Grafton's ministry, who attempted to carry that statute into effect by imposing the tax upon tea; or, finally, to Lord North, who commenced the war against the colonies, and who continued that war after the interests of America were identified with those of our hereditary and inveterate enemies. In short, there was not any

individual of political pre-eminence, or any party then existing, who did not partake in those measures which proved the cause of rending the British empire, though, like a band of felons, all of them recriminated in their turns, and strove to extenuate their own guilt by ascribing to the instigation of their associates the measures which they themselves had abetted, but which they now pretended to have secretly disapproved of.

One of the most interesting debates to the friends of religious liberty during this Session of Parliament, was occasioned by a petition of the Protestant dissenters, to obtain exemption from subscribing the doctrinal articles of the Church of England. The petition was presented by Mr. Dunning, who, both on account of his talents and his zeal, held the first rank among its supporters. His figure was uncouth, and his voice harsh from a sort of nasal pronunciation, but his expression perspicuous, correct, and nervous, and his arguments so powerful, that any attempt to answer them would have been futile.* Lord North, in

* His sentences were concise, elegant, epigrammatic, and impressive, and so like the letters of Junius, that I have ever since entertained a strong persuasion of his being the author of these celebrated productions.

reply, laboured to turn the attention of the House to such circumstances as were calculated to supersede or preclude the intervention of argument. He affirmed that the petition had originated with a party among the dissenters who were notoriously inimical to the orthodox doctrines maintained by the Established Church; that the concession prayed for would be an inlet to a torrent of heresy, not less fatal to the Christian religion than to the Episcopalian establishment; and he alluded, jocosely rather than seriously, to the personal danger which he, as a minister, must incur, by consenting to destroy the bulwarks, which the wisdom of our fathers had erected for its security. His expression was, "that he might expect to have his eyes pulled out by the indignant multitude, if he consented to a petition that was to open an inroad on the fundamental articles of Christian faith." Great stress was likewise laid on a counter-petition from a considerable body of the dissenting clergy, distinguished for their loyalty, and zeal for the orthodox faith. The petition of the dissenters for exemption from subscription was rejected at this time; but such was the impression made on the public mind by the argu-

ments adduced in support of it, that, in the course of a few years afterwards, it obtained the approbation of the legislature with little opposition, and without being productive of those portentous evils which had been predicted on the first moving of the question.

I returned to Scotland in company with Mr. and Mrs. Dobie, in the beginning of June. It is a circumstance not unworthy of notice, because it shews the increased expense of travelling, that we paid no more than 7d. per mile for posting from London to York. Finding the horses not so good, we paid 9d. per mile (which was the ordinary charge), for the remaining part of the journey. The duty on posting (2d. per mile) did not commence till 1st July 1779.

CHAPTER V.

1779-1785.

SOON after my return to Scotland, the country began to be agitated by the important measures of Government in favour of the English Roman Catholics.* The statutes of the 11th and 12th of William, 1699-1700, imposing the severest restrictions and the most cruel penalties on the adherents to the Roman Catholic religion, were repealed with the unanimous consent of both Houses of Parliament, and with the cordial approbation of every citizen

* The real purpose of this act was to relieve his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion from certain penalties and disabilities imposed on them by an act made in the 11th and 12th years of William III., but was entitled, *An Act for the further Prevention of the Growth of Popery*. Such, I believe, would have been the effect of it; but the title was absurd when compared with the contents, and weakly contrived as a blind to prevent the fanatical alarm and ferment which afterwards happened.

of enlightened understanding. As a counterpart of these infamous statutes had been adopted by the States in Scotland, it was announced by Mr. Dundas, then in the confidence of administration, that the same relief would be extended to the Scotch Roman Catholics in the next Session of Parliament.

There has not, perhaps, in my time, any question occurred which, from first to last, and in all the stages of its discussion, has been the occasion of exhibiting more sudden versatility of sentiments, and more unaccountable inconsistency of conduct, than that which relates to the claims and interests of the Roman Catholics. It is a curious fact, that the first alarm of the intended indulgence in their behalf, and its portentous danger, was proclaimed by a non-juring Bishop, at the head of a sect that had always been considered as the least disaffected to the Roman Catholics, or rather, since the revolution of 1688, as their secret friends; nor was it less extraordinary, that persons who adhered to the most rigid form of the Presbyterian faith and discipline, should have coalesced with a party hitherto the objects of their detestation and jealousy, hardly less than

declared Papists. I have no doubt but that the bigotry of individuals, independent of any extraneous influence, would have been sufficient to instigate that tumultuary outrage which was soon productive of the most scandalous and mischievous effects in both nations; but, at the same time, it is certain that the letters of Bishop Abernethy gave the signal for the explosion of the fanatical frenzy which quickly broke out in every town and parish in Scotland.

It is not, however, my purpose at present to enter into the history of this event, farther than I was personally interested in it; nor is it necessary to do so, because a circumstantial account of the proceedings will be found in all the periodical publications of the times. I had, ever since I became capable of exercising judgment, regarded the penal statutes affecting the Roman Catholics as disgraceful to the British code and to the Protestant religion. I was delighted with the news of their being repealed so far as related to England, and earnestly cherished the hope of the same generosity being extended to Scotland; and, far from concealing my sentiments, I embraced the earliest opportunity of resisting the efforts of

the intolerance and bigotry which began to be displayed in every corner of the country. Associations were formed for supporting the Protestant religion, and, under that insidious pretext, were regarded by the populace as the guardians of their dearest and most sacred privileges. A Protestant committee was established in the metropolis, to suggest and direct such measures as appeared most effectual for counteracting the impending danger. Agents were despatched to all the towns and many of the larger villages, to obtain subscriptions to a petition to Parliament against the repeal of the penal statutes affecting the Roman Catholics, and to raise funds. In Jedburgh, the magistrates, ministers, and the bulk of the people were convened in the court-house by the ringing of the bell, and there were few who did not consent to the exactions of these fanatical vagrants, though some so acted merely under the awe of that ferocious spirit which now pervaded the lower orders of the people of every religious sect. I declined attendance on this motley assemblage, and was the only individual who refused any contribution, notwithstanding the entreaties of my best friends, proceeding from a tender concern for

my personal safety. The business was afterwards taken up by the Presbytery of Jedburgh, and followed by a resolution to call a Synod extraordinary, which, it was taken for granted, would concur with the opinion of the Presbytery, viz.—that a petition and remonstrance ought to be presented to both Houses of Parliament to deprecate that extension of the indulgence to the Roman Catholics in Scotland, so much dreaded as subversive of the Protestant interest, and destructive to the peace of the country. Dr. Charters and Mr. Riccaltoun joined me in opposing the resolution of the Presbytery, and we entered our dissent* in the minutes. I now reflect on my conduct during this trying crisis with heartfelt pleasure.

What an amazing change of popular opinion

* The dissent was taken on broad grounds, the following being among the author's Reasons of Dissent given in to the Presbytery:—"3. Because the professed design is to remonstrate against the repeal of a law which invades liberty of conscience, the most valuable and sacred right of man. 4. Because a penal statute about religion is in violent contradiction to the genius and temper of the gospel, which breathes the most enlarged charity and good-will even towards the ignorant, and those who are out of the way. 5. Because the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, can never be promoted by fines, imprisonments, or persecution of any kind, or in any degree."—*Minutes of Presbytery*, 18th February 1779.—Ed.

has passed under my observation within the compass of a few years! Not only individual members of the Church of Scotland, but the ecclesiastical leaders of that party which had been distinguished for the uniformity and ardour of antipapistical zeal, and who were the most violent in opposing the release of the guiltless Roman Catholics from unjust and inhuman severities, have now become the most impatient and clamorous for granting them the unlimited privileges of Protestant subjects. What is still more extraordinary, they have brought over the mass of the people to adopt their sentiments, and the frantic enthusiasm, which formerly militated against the Roman Catholics when they had reason and justice on their side, has now become officiously active in their support and service, when it must be admitted by the most candid, that their claims, if not culpably ambitious, are urged with indecent intemperance;* nor will it be denied by the most liberal and considerate, that the grant of these claims must necessarily be attended with some risk of danger to the constitution. Such a sudden

* I allude particularly to the proceedings of the Catholic Committee, 1811, and to the Catholic Board, 1812.

and complete revolution of sentiment, especially on a topic connected with religious principle, rarely occurs in the history of the Christian Church. I do not outstretch warrantable speculation when I aver, that submission to Episcopalian government, nay, the adoption of Socinian doctrines by the successors of the popular clergy in Scotland fifty years hence, would not be more extraordinary and unexpected than what has already taken place in the instance described.

How are we to account for such transmutation of sentiments and such complete change of character as that which has been exhibited in the instance now recited? Somewhat we may fairly impute to honourable motives, and the rapid progress of light and liberality among all orders and descriptions of men in this part of the kingdom; but I am satisfied that I do not deviate from truth and candour, when I assert that, without the co-operation of the more ignoble instruments of party spirit and political artifice, that cause would not have been adequate to the effect produced.

I deeply regret that our good king, whose integrity I revere, unfortunately found himself restrained by conscientious motives from consent-

ing to the qualified and guarded enlargement of the privileges of his Roman Catholic subjects, proposed immediately after the union of Ireland and Great Britain, and which would then have been received as a generous boon, and might have prevented unreasonable demands, stimulated by a sense of protracted injustice, which, it may be feared, under the nurture of restless incendiaries, will now survive the most liberal concessions in the power of Government to bestow.

The ill success of the American war after my return from London in 1779, began to produce a great change in the sentiments of the nation at large. Many leading politicians who had contended eagerly for the right of Parliament to tax the colonies, and for the necessity and justice of coercive measures to enforce it, professed a recantation of their former opinions, and exerted their influence to thwart every plan on the part of administration for re-establishing the authority of the mother country. The discussion of this subject not only engaged the attention of public bodies of men, but became a principal subject of conversation in every company, and often excited angry debates, which impaired the pleasures of

social life, and weakened the confidence of friendship. I adhered inflexibly to what I believed to be a righteous cause, and was so much provoked by the inconsistency and versatility of some of my friends, who had been wont to agree with me on every important political point, that I resolved, for the immediate relief of my own mind, to publish my sentiments on the state of public affairs, and the arguments on which they were founded. I had reason to hope that the sentiments and execution of my little work* would not belie its intentions, and had the satisfaction to find that it was favourably received by the public.

Unmoved by the fatality of events and the vicissitudes of popular opinion, I still adhere to all the sentiments expressed in the *Enquiry*, with the exception of what relates to the character and ministerial conduct of Lord North. In the heat of contest relative to any question deeply interesting to the public, it is natural to feel a propensity, almost irresistible, to extenuate the errors and to overrate the wisdom and talents of any individual who stands forth as the champion of the cause we

* *Candid Thoughts on American Independence; or, an Enquiry into the Causes of National Misfortunes and Discontents.* London, 1780.

have espoused. During the continuance of the American war, and the frequent discussion of the multifarious topics connected with it, the personal merit of Lord North, and the justice and expediency of the war, appeared indissolubly associated and interwoven. His opposers were considered, and, indeed, avowed themselves as his personal enemies, a circumstance which heightened and corroborated the attachment of the friends of the minister, who was daily subjected to unprecedented virulence of reproach. He seemed, in the eyes of loyal partizans, to be acting the part of a martyr in the cause of patriotism. Dazzled with verbose pretensions to firmness, and heroism, and undaunted perseverance, we were blinded to the fickleness, procrastination, timidity, and inconsistency, which progressively paved the way for the complete triumph of domestic faction and foreign rebellion.

I now return to my personal history. From the time of my settlement at Jedburgh, I rented a field of a few acres, which, together with the glebe, occupied the attention of my leisure hours, and afforded me recreation and amusement. I even acquired the reputation of being a skilful farmer, to

which I had not the slightest pretensions. The only speculation in farming, or indeed of any kind into which I ever entered, was an attempt to profit by raising a crop of tobacco in the year 1782. Of the occasion and circumstances of this speculation I shall give some details, because at that time they excited great interest among agriculturists in this and the adjacent counties.

After the commencement of the American war, the price of tobacco had been gradually advancing, and in the year 1781 it reached the unprecedented rate of two shillings per pound. Dr. Jackson, a gentleman who possessed a small estate in the vicinity of Kelso, had, for two years preceding, laid out a few acres in the culture of tobacco, which he perfectly understood, having resided several years in America, and given particular attention to that branch of agriculture. If I rightly recollect, he mentioned to me his having sold the whole of his crop at the rate of two shillings and sixpence per pound. His example and accredited success communicated the rage of speculation to all the neighbouring farmers. There was not, perhaps, a single farmer within the counties of Roxburgh, the Merse, and Selkirkshire,

who did not devote a considerable part of his arable ground to this adventurous speculation, and many thousand acres were planted with tobacco in the spring of 1782. I did not escape the epidemical mania, and, in partnership with Dr. Lindesay* and Mr. Fair, two of my intimate acquaintances, I set apart five acres of the glebe for a tobacco plantation.

By a combination of circumstances, unforeseen and unexpected, our industry was rendered unavailing. The weather, during the whole of the spring and summer 1782, was the most unfavourable that had occurred within the memory of any person then living. The snow, which had been falling incessantly during the winter, continued so long on the ground, that the sowing of every kind of grain was postponed at least a month beyond the usual time. The summer was uncommonly wet and cold, and the harvest so late, that the most of the crop was not cut down till October, a great part of it in November, and no small proportion

* For some account of Dr. Lindesay and his family, with others of the author's parishioners, and himself, about this period, see the Journal of a Visit to Jedburgh by Burns the poet, in his *Life and Works* by Chambers, vol. ii., pp. 81-84.—Ed.

in the high grounds never ripened. If such was the fate of our indigenous plants, the complete failure of the tobacco, and the disappointment of the planters, could not be matter of surprise. A very small portion of it, perhaps not one acre out of twenty that had been planted, produced a mature crop, or such as was fit to enter the market. Besides the backwardness and severity of the season, the tobacco crop sustained incalculable damage by a tremendous thunderstorm, attended with hail, in the month of August. Most of the leaves were riddled, and the most luxuriant plants entirely destroyed. But, independent of natural causes, every hope of profit was frustrated by another untoward event, which had never entered into the computation of the farmers. The tax on tobacco had been lately augmented, I believe, to the amount of one shilling and fourpence per pound. The dealers in American tobacco, and particularly the Glasgow merchants, who had their warehouses crammed with immense stores of it, and were selling it at an exorbitant price, ignorant of the insignificance of the home crop, became jealous of its encroachment on their profits, and were suspected of communicating to the servants

of Government magnified estimates of its value, and of its operation to the detriment of the public revenue. The Crown lawyers, both in England and Scotland, were consulted, and, after mature deliberation, agreed in opinion that the Colonial laws of England were equally binding on both kingdoms, from the period of the Union, when all the privileges of Colonial trade were imparted to Scotland, and that all the growers of tobacco were strictly liable to the penalties enacted by the statute of the 12th of Charles II. Though the advisers of the ministry admitted that unavoidable ignorance was a cogent and justifiable reason for remitting the heavy fines incurred by the transgressors of the law, they judged it unwarrantable to indulge them in an exemption from the duties imposed on the tobacco of foreign growth.

In the end, after much correspondence, the Government came to the resolution of instructing the Commissioners of the Customs at Edinburgh to examine competent witnesses, for ascertaining the average value of the home grown tobacco, and authorizing them to purchase it from the planters at the price fixed upon (which was not more than fourpence per pound), upon the condition of its

being carried to Leith, where it was to be weighed and consigned to the flames.*

About this time pecuniary embarrassments, arising from a variety of causes into which I need not enter, first suggested to me the idea of becoming an author. My pamphlet on the American War had met with the approbation of persons esteemed to be good judges; and several of my friends of literary eminence urged me to undertake the labour of some historical work.

The subject or plan of authorship was the occasion of long and anxious deliberation. Theology would have been most consonant to my taste and habitual course of study, but was not likely to contribute either to my profit or popularity. In the tract of my historical inquiries I had always attended most to political transactions. They appeared most interesting to me at the time of reading, and my memory was more correct and faithful in the retention of them than of any of the other topics included in works which pass under the name of history. The Revolution, 1688, in every view of the subject, may be considered as one of the most important events recorded in

* See Scots Magazine, 1783.

the British annals, and is more comprehensive of political history than any period of the same extent. The zeal by which I have ever been actuated in the cause of religious liberty, inspired me with a high esteem of the character of King William,* who was in his heart, and upon principle, a friend to religious toleration, and became the patron and protector of it more than any Protestant sovereign before him had ever been. The recent perusal of Sir John Dalrymple's Memoirs† and Macpherson's‡

* Upon the review of my History of Political Transactions, there are only two facts which appear to me exceptionable in the moral conduct of William, and which may afford plausible ground for impeaching my impartiality as an historian. First, His availing himself of the scandalous aspersion of King James imposing a supposititious child to be the heir of the crown, to the exclusion of his daughters, because they adhered to the Protestant faith; he had too much good sense to believe this, and the imputation of such a crime to his father-in-law ought to have been mentioned in severe terms of reprobation. Second, The massacre of Glencoe, if he really was aware of the cruel effects that were likely to follow when he signed the instructions to his Scotch ministers, is an indelible stain upon his character; but, though his doing this might arise from inconsideration or rash precipitancy, which I really suppose to have been the case, he was deeply culpable for not having expressed sorrow and indignation when he heard of this horrid deed, and for not inflicting disgrace upon the ministers who were the instigators of it.

† Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland, from the last Parliament of Charles II. until the sea battle off La Hogue, 3 vols. 4to, 1771.

‡ History of Great Britain from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hanover, 2 vols. 4to, 1775.

History, particularly of the latter, had left unpleasant impressions on my own mind; and I was suspicious of their discoveries having a pernicious influence on the sentiments and tempers of superficial readers. These considerations decided the choice of my subject.

I began early in the year 1782 to make out catalogues of all the books necessary to be consulted, and to read, and make notes preparatory to the entering on the composition of my projected work. I had obtained permission to draw whatever books I chose to inspect from the Advocates' and the College Libraries. I often resorted to Edinburgh for the purpose of reading and critical research, and carried to the country such volumes as I had not leisure to peruse on the spot. I had also access to several of the best furnished private libraries,—as Minto, Edgerston, and Mellerstain. But from the commencement of my labour, I had foreseen that another visit to London, however inconvenient, would be indispensable in order to give me access to the most valuable original documents for perfecting my work. I accordingly, after making a hasty sketch of the outline, began to put some detached parts of it, relative to the

most interesting facts, into an extended and correct form, for the purpose of being shewn to persons qualified to point out the most authentic channels of information, or of assisting me to obtain them. The specimens I had finished were submitted to the inspection of Sir Gilbert Elliot, who was of opinion that they might be exhibited to my advantage; and he encouraged my perseverance, by assuring me of every service in his power to procure materials, and promote my success.

In the beginning of April 1785 I set out for London in company with Mr. Elliot of Wells,* to whom I was introduced by Dr. Elliot of Otterburn, a gentleman justly esteemed for his scientific acquirements, adorned with amiable dispositions and graceful manners. Mr. Elliot, my fellow-traveller, was then only in his nineteenth year, but discovered such a fund of information, and such solidity of judgment as are rarely found among the best educated persons in the maturity of life. His predominant taste, as well as mine, turned on political subjects; and, though our sentiments

* Afterwards the Right Hon. William Elliot, Chief Secretary of Ireland during the Fox and Grenville administration in 1806-7. He died October 26, 1818.—Ed.

were often discordant,—for he discovered great acrimony against the existing ministry, and condemned the American war,—our conversation, and even our disputes, became productive of reciprocal sentiments of esteem and attachment, which were increased by our occasional intercourse afterwards. The eminence to which he has risen in political life, has of late widened the distance of station between us, and perhaps rendered him less tolerant of the difference between my political opinions and his own.

My principal object in making this visit to London was to forward my historical labours, and I lost no time in using all the means and endeavours in my power for that purpose. On the recommendation of Dr. Kippis, I was admitted a student in the British Museum, attended regularly at the stated hours of admission, and inspected all the manuscripts and printed works relative to the most interesting events and political transactions from the restoration of Charles the Second to the accession of Queen Anne; and I transcribed such portions as contained important information, or required consideration. In doing this I was subjected to much superfluous labour, as I discovered

afterwards, on enlarging the scope of my reading, that many of the papers I transcribed had been already published. Of this description was a small volume containing several holograph letters of King William, apparently written in great haste while he was in the camp with the army. They are short and sensible, and the manuscript shews that he had either little store of paper, or had been frugal in the use of it. I found all these letters afterwards in printed publications.

During my attendance at the Museum I met with the greatest attention from all the officials there, and was laid under the deepest obligations to Dr. Woide,* the Oriental secretary, who had the charge of the Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts. As the students were not permitted to carry any books or papers without the walls of the Museum, he procured me the favour of perusing in his lodgings such as I wished to consider with greater attention, or had not time to overtake during the limited hours of attendance in the reading-room. I came to him at an early hour, and had great pleasure in his conversation at breakfast. He was

* Charles Godfrey Woide, D.D., F.R.S.; also for some time preacher in the German Chapel Royal, St. James'. He died in 1790.

a native of Poland, and had been a Protestant dissenter. I regretted my ignorance of the Hebrew, in which he was a proficient and might have contributed to my improvement in Biblical criticism, —a subject which he often introduced, and I endeavoured to avoid, from the consciousness of my incapacity to bear a part in it, so far as connected with the Hebrew. Dr. Woide was at that time superintending the printing of the Alexandrian manuscript of the Greek New Testament.*

My hopes of obtaining access to original papers were, for the present, grievously disappointed. Sir Gilbert Elliot had not then contracted such an acquaintance with the Duke of Portland† as to warrant the freedom of recommending me to his grace's patronage. Mr. Dundas interested himself in my business with great frankness and zeal, and conveyed some specimens of my composition to the Earl of Hardwicke,‡ with a favourable attestation of my political principles and character. His lordship was understood to be a warm friend to

* It was published the following year, 1786.—Ed.

† Born 1738, died 1809. This was, of course, the eminent statesman of that name who had been at the head of the Coalition Ministry of 1783.—Ed.

‡ Philip, second Earl of Hardwicke, born 1720, died 1796.

the Revolution, and an admirer of the character of King William, and had been diligent in collecting original papers and traditional anecdotes relating to the most interesting public affairs and the state of parties at that period; and it was taken for granted that my political sentiments, expressed in the specimen of my work sent by Mr. Dundas, would have met with his lordship's approbation, and been the means of procuring important communications from him. How much was I surprised and mortified when he returned my manuscript to Mr. Dundas, with a note, certifying his conviction of the truth and accuracy of Mr. Macpherson as a historian,—the very author whom I had made the subject of censure and refutation.

My residence in the metropolis at this time, independent of literary views, was productive both of instruction and amusement. From Dr. Kippis, whom I often visited, and from other literary men, I obtained ample intelligence concerning the existing state of literature and politics. Our domestic circle at Panton Square was a very happy one; and Mr. William Charters, Mr. Loch from Edinburgh, who was one of my earliest acquaintances, with a few of my sisters' kind friends, often made

parties to enjoy together both the amusements of the town and country excursions.

The theatre, always irresistibly attractive to me, had lately received new lustre by the acquisition of Mrs. Siddons.* Next to Garrick, and in the department of tragedy, she possessed more astonishing powers than any performer that had ever appeared in our age and country. Though in representing the passions of indignation, fury, etc., inferior to my early favourite Mrs. Yates, she far surpassed that admirable actress in the expressions of tenderness and grief, and all those other interesting affections which are familiar to ordinary experience. In particular, the rapid changes of her features, complexion, and attitudes in some scenes, to correspond with the alternations of fear, love, sorrow, joy, and contempt, appeared so natural, that the actress was forgotten, and the audience for the moment were carried away rather by sympathy than admiration. In the character of Mrs. Beverley in the *Gamester*, and in that of Lady Macbeth,† she outdid all description. I saw

* Born 1755, died 1831.

† Mrs. Siddons first appeared in the character of Lady Macbeth on the 2d of February in this year (1785).

her first attempt in comedy on the London boards, in the character of Rosalind in *As you Like it*, and, though from the popular prepossession in her favour it was received with loud applause by a crowded and brilliant audience, I presumed to whisper my suspicion that her fame in comedy would be of short duration.

I had failed in several applications to be admitted to the gallery of the House of Commons during the discussion of the propositions for regulating the commercial and political intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland, which led to some of the ablest and warmest debates in both Houses of Parliament; but I had the good fortune to hear Mr. Pitt open the Budget. The dry nature of the subject did not allow scope to that glowing eloquence and masterly address which he displayed in popular argumentative debates, but the elegance and perspicuity of financial detail rendered it not only interesting but pleasant, notwithstanding the length of his speech, viz.—an hour and forty minutes. What astonished me most, was the minute accuracy of his statement, and the promptitude and fidelity of his memory; for, as far as I could observe, without any assistance

from notes, and without any pause or hesitation, he specified all the multiplied sources of revenue and the articles of expenditure, often descending to fractions, and entering into intricate calculations with as much celerity as if they had been written under his eye. The tax on servant maids was then first proposed. Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall,* who was fond of a joke, set the House in a roar of laughter by saying that he had heard out of doors, with great alarm and indignation, of the intended exaction, and come to the House to protect the sex against the ungallant rapacity of the minister, but that he had laid his hands so gently upon them, that his wrath was appeased. The tax was half-a-crown annually. Mr. Pitt was, I remember, at that time represented by the anti-ministerian libellers as utterly insensible to the attraction of female charms.

General Melville, with whom I had occasional intercourse, was at this time enthusiastically officious in promoting the success of a deistical chapel lately opened under his patronage and instigation, by Mr. Williams,† who had formerly

* Born 1720, died 1797.

† The Rev. David Williams (born 1738, died 1816) first proposed

officiated in a dissenting congregation. The professed purpose of this institution was to unite all the worshippers of the one supreme God, without any reference to such articles of faith as were the cause of religious separation and discriminating names. A liturgy, excellently suited to this latitudinarian plan, was composed by his chaplain, Mr. Williams; and the General exercised unwearied solicitude to gain proselytes, and to collect attendants every Sunday at the appointed place

his scheme in his *Essays on Public Worship* (published in 1773), in one of which he declared that "all honest, pious men—Calvinists, Arians, Socinians, Jews, Turks, and infidels—might and ought to worship God together in spirit and in truth;" and that "the man who objects to this may be eminent in a party, but, in the estimation of every one who has cultivated his mind by true philosophy . . . . is a weak and contemptible bigot." His "Liturgy on the Universal Principles of Religion and Morality" (which is composed, for the most part, in the words of Scripture), appeared in 1776, when a chapel was also first opened for its use in Margaret Street, Cavendish Square. In 1778 Mr. Williams published two 4to volumes of *Lectures read in Margaret Street, Cavendish Square.* In that publication, the author, founding on the experience of the two first years of his "institution in Margaret Street," had the temerity to assert that his position, "that good men of all nations and all religions, that believers in Moses, Christ, and Mahomet, free thinkers, Deists, *and even Atheists, who acknowledge beneficent principles in nature,* may unite in a form of public worship on all the great and most important truths of piety and morality—can no more be a question." Mr. Williams was also the author of *Letters on Political Liberty*, a work which passed through several editions.—Ed.

of worship in Portland Square. He was particularly anxious to prevail on ministers connected with the dissenting interest to give their countenance to his Catholic design, by preaching occasionally for Mr. Williams on subjects of a moral tendency. Flattering my liberal principles, he requested the favour of my consenting to undertake this duty. I told the General that I did not yield to him in the expansion of my charity, but that it was my firm and conscientious conviction, that no person who had heard of the gospel and believed it to be a revelation from God, could be authorized to approach and worship him but in the name of the Mediator whom he had appointed.

I consented, however, to accompany the General the next Sunday to his favourite oratory. The spirit of the prayers was devout and liberal, and all the sentiments contained in them, pure, rational, and practical. A chapter of the Proverbs was read with great solemnity and judicious emphasis, without any comment; for, so far from rejecting the Scriptures in the mass, select passages were acknowledged by this new sect of Illuminati to hold a distinguished rank in the catalogue of moral didactic compositions; and a discourse,

without the preface of a text, was afterwards delivered, describing, with glowing eloquence, the tendency and fatal effects of the prevalent vice of gaming. The congregation was not numerous, and, from their apparent indifference, I suspected that they had assembled from motives of curiosity more than of principle or zeal. I did not count above half a dozen ladies; and after the conclusion of the service I noticed this circumstance to the General as ominous. I told him that I did not believe it possible that any religious sect could flourish or even continue to exist, without the countenance of the fair sex, and that I highly applauded their wisdom and gratitude in withholding it from an institution subversive of the Christian religion, to which they were indebted for the elevation of their rank, and the kindness and courtesy they had obtained in every country where it had been introduced.

My prediction was fulfilled; and the immorality of this moral teacher, Mr. Williams, soon after becoming notorious, superseded the intervention of argument, and accelerated the disgrace and dispersion of his flock.

Upon the dismission of this little congregation.

we were met by such an immense crowd pressing at the entrances to the chapel, that we could not make our escape without a struggle; and when I inquired who came next, I was answered by one of the female sex, which seemed to predominate in this new assemblage, *The Bereans, if you please.* The learned Dr. Horsley* a few days before had mentioned this sect (the Bereans) to me, of which I had not before heard. He said it had lately sprung up in the west of Scotland, and he seemed to speak of it as an interesting event, and likely to make a figure in the history of the Christian Church. I confess I was rather ashamed to be found ignorant of an event occurring at my own door which appeared to him so important.

* Born 1733, died 1806.

CHAPTER VI.

1785-1791.

AFTER my return to the country, few days passed without my making some progress in my History; at the same time I never neglected parochial duties, and, from regular exercise by walking or riding every morning, my health continued vigorous and unbroken.

In the course of this summer, 1785, I was honoured with a visit of the celebrated Mr. Burke, attended by his son, Mr. Windham, and Sir Gilbert Elliot, whose guests they then were. Mr. Burke was on his way to Glasgow to be installed in the rectorship of the University,* which had

* Mr. Burke was first elected Rector of the University of Glasgow in November 1783, and installed in April 1784. He was re-elected in November 1784; and in the autumn of the following year he again visited Scotland, for the purpose of being re-admitted to the office. It was on the occasion of the latter visit that he was accompanied by Mr. Windham, and by his own son, and had been the guest of Sir Gilbert Elliot. On this occasion

been recently conferred on him. Sir Gilbert had the goodness to invite me to accompany his visitors to Minto, and afforded me the opportunity of knowing more of Mr. Burke's sentiments and manners than I could have done from the short interviews I occasionally had with this eminent person, when permitted to wait upon him in

" he made," says his biographer, "an excursion of some length to the usual picturesque resort of travellers in that country. . . . No particulars of this journey seem to have been preserved. . . . Burke, writing in the end of October to Shackleton, thus shortly adverts to the excursion:—'I have had a very pleasant tour over a considerable part of Scotland, and have seen the works both of God and man in some new and striking forms.'"—Prior's *Life of Burke*, p. 246. The account given in the text of Mr. Burke's visit to Minto is an interesting addition to Mr. Prior's brief narrative of the Scottish tour, and is the more curious, because, as the editor has been enabled to ascertain, through the courtesy of the Earl of Minto, the Minto papers for this year (1785) are unfortunately now incomplete, and contain no more than a passing allusion to Mr. Burke. A singular tradition in regard to Burke's Rectorship of Glasgow College was referred to by Lord Jeffrey, in 1821 (*Lord Rector's Addresses*, p. 3, *note*), and has been often repeated since, to the effect that, in attempting to speak on the occasion of his installation, Burke broke down, apologizing (as it is generally added) for concluding his speech abruptly, by saying that "he had never before addressed so learned an audience." It does not appear on what authority this story, in itself not a very probable one, rests. There is no colour for it in the accounts by Prior, and by the contemporary Edinburgh and Glasgow newspapers, of Mr. Burke's address in 1784. (See also Bisset's *Life of Burke*, 2d edition, vol. ii., p. 185.) In the following year his re-installation took place during the long vacation; and, as far as can be discovered, was unaccompanied by any public address.—Ed.

London. During the few days I thus spent in his company, all sorts of subjects—politics, criticism, theology—were introduced in the course of our conversation; and I was astonished with the richness and brilliancy of his language, and the universality of his knowledge. Mr. Burke professed himself a firm believer in the divine authority of the Gospel; but discovered what I thought an illiberal and exclusive partiality to the Episcopalian government and forms of worship. He spoke with high admiration of Butler's Analogy, as containing the most satisfactory answer to the objections of philosophical sceptics. I was not a little surprised by the disparaging, and even contemptuous terms in which he expressed himself in regard to the Americans, whom he had so often eulogised in Parliament during the continuance of the late war. He said that he would not be surprised at the defection of some of the colonies from the Union—I believe he mentioned the southern states. Their constitution was not then settled, and the democratic party threatened to overpower the interests of the Federalists, to whom he gave full credit for wisdom and patriotism. Of Washington he spoke with enthusiasm, and said that his cha-

racter would be transmitted to the latest ages, among the first of heroes and patriots. As Governor Elliot, Sir Gilbert's uncle, who had been invested with the presidency of New York, and uniformly loyal and zealous in the British interest, made one of our company, I thought Mr. Burke's panegyric on Washington inconsiderate and indelicate; and I could well perceive that both the Governor and his brother Admiral Elliot* were of my opinion. When I alluded to this subject afterwards in a conversation with Governor Elliot, he said that "if the most artful caution constituted greatness of character, Washington certainly had a just claim to the precedency Mr. Burke had assigned him; for that he always waited for the opinions of others before he declared his own;" by which I understood Governor Elliot to mean that Washington yielded craftily to the current of popular sentiment, and that he was rather the defender than the instigator of the independence of America. At the same time, Mr. Elliot checked my curiosity for more particular information, by saying that the American affairs were to him a source of such painful recollection that he wished never to make them the

* Who had so gallantly defeated Thurot's expedition in 1760.

subject of discourse, and even, if it were possible, to expel them from his thoughts.

For some years I recollect nothing of personal interest worth relating, except that in the year 1788 our relative Admiral Greig* died at Revel.

* Sir Samuel Greig (born 1735, died 1788), was originally in the Royal Navy of England, and had risen to the rank of Lieutenant, when a request having been made by the Court of Russia to the Court of Great Britain for some English officers to aid in the improvement of her navy, he had the honour to be one of the officers selected for this duty. Besides labouring indefatigably and successfully for the improvement or rather creation of the Russian navy, it is well known that he greatly distinguished himself by his gallantry and ability in active service, particularly in the engagement between the Russian and Turkish fleets in the channel of Scio in 1770. On that occasion, "the Turkish fleet"—to quote an article in the *Scots Magazine* (vol. li., p. 18), from which this note is compiled—"retired in the night off the island of Scio, and were protected by batteries from the land. Captain Greig was appointed Commodore, and sent upon the dangerous service of destroying the Turkish fleet. At twelve o'clock at night he engaged the enemy with four ships of the line, and about one o'clock he bore down with the fire-ships. The crews of the fire-ships were so intimidated that Commodore Greig and Lieutenant Dugdale (another British officer who acted under him), were obliged to keep them to their duty by dint of sword and pistol, and even to put the match to the fire-ships with their own hands, and to jump overboard and swim to their boats amidst the fire of the Turks and the alarm of being destroyed by the explosion. In five hours the Turkish fleet, except one man of war and some gallies, which were towed off by the Russian fleet, was totally destroyed. The town and castle were then reduced to a heap of rubbish by the bombardment of the squadron, and at nine in the morning there was scarcely a vestige of a town, a castle, and a fine fleet, which had all been in existence at one the same morning."

It was suspected that he had fallen a victim by poison to the jealousy of the Russian commanders. Several years afterwards, Dr. Hardie of Ashkirk, at my suggestion, undertook to write a life of Admiral Greig, for an edition of the Biographia Britannica projected by Dr. Gregory, and I believe lived to complete his task. I was anxious that this article should be undertaken by one who had the opportunity of knowing those moral excellences of our distinguished friend which did not fall under the public notice, particularly his humility of spirit, his modest and unassuming manners, and his constant piety, never corrupted by the high station and splendid honours to which he was advanced. The event to which I shall now refer is of more public importance.

The Test Act, 25 of Charles II., had always appeared to me not only illiberal but impious, and deeply injurious to the interests of religion

Count Orlow [the commander] immediately promoted Commodore Greig to the rank of an Admiral, which was confirmed by an express from the Empress." At his death he was Admiral of all the Russias, and Governor of Cronstadt. The name of Admiral Greig is not to be found in any of the more accessible English biographical dictionaries. With regard to the memoir mentioned afterwards as written by Dr. Hardie for the Biographia Britannica, it does not appear that it was ever published.—Ed.

and morality. Encouraged by the wise and generous concessions granted by the legislature to the English Roman Catholics in the session 1779, the Protestant dissenters presented a petition to Parliament, 8th May 1789, and 2d March 1790, craving exemption from the Corporation and Test Acts. I attended to the progress of this movement and the debates which ensued with vigilant anxiety. It was admitted, or suggested by some of the members who opposed the petition, that though the dissenters, as such, not being acknowledged in a corporate capacity by the Constitution, could not have any right to the indulgence solicited, yet plausible and solid arguments for release from the Test Act might be urged by the members of a Church recognised and established by law; and, to the best of my recollection, the Church of Scotland was named, and Mr. Pitt, then minister, referred to this distinction in his speech on that question.* The admission of this distinction—

* The Church of Scotland was referred to by Mr. Fox. What he said (March 2, 1790) was, that "at the Union two Churches were established —the Kirk in Scotland, the Hierarchy in England. The dissenters in the former kingdom were not deprived of the right of holding the same offices with the members of the Kirk, provided they took the oaths of abjuration and of fidelity to the family on the throne. It could not there-

founded, indeed, on a partial and restricted liberality —suggested to me not only the propriety of making an application, but the hope of applying with success to the legislature for a deliverance from the operation of the Test Act in behalf of the members of the Church of Scotland. Under this impresssion, and in the prospect of being elected a member of the ensuing General Assembly, I drew up a short overture to be adopted by our presbytery, and transmitted to the General Assembly, declaring—That the extension of the Test Act of Charles the Second to members of the Church of Scotland was a violation of the privileges stipulated to them by the Treaty of Union, injurious to the interests of religion and morality, and recommending to the General Assembly to embrace the most speedy and effectual means for its repeal, so far as it applied to the members of the Presbyterian Church. I communicated this overture to my friend Dr. Charters, who applauded my design. Its transmission was approved of by the presby-

fore be said that those who held a contrary doctrine with that of the Church of England were hostile to toleration." Mr. Pitt in his reply said, that as to Scotland, Mr. Fox's observations were inapplicable, for the Scotch had no Episcopal establishment to support.—Ed.

tery, adopted by the Committee of Overtures, and recommended to the consideration of the General Assembly.

In the Assembly, my overture produced a long and interesting debate, Dr. Charters and I shortly opening the business as the representatives from the presbytery of Jedburgh.

That the Test Act was a grievance was acknowledged by a majority of the members who took any part in the discussion, not only by those who supported the overture, but by most of those who opposed it.* The latter, however, contended that it was such only in theory, which they inferred from the silent acquiescence of the Church of Scotland in the law as it stood ever since the Union. There were a few who censured the spirit of the overture as illiberal, and ascribed the origin of it to factious instigation; but the more solid grounds of opposition were the imprudence of mov-

* The speakers for the overture were Dr. Charters, Dr. Somerville, Mr. Walker, Mr. Dun, Mr. Mitchell, the Procurator, Mr. Fergusson of Craigdarroch, Mr. Lapsley, Sir H. Moncreiff, the Dean of Faculty, Dr. Johnston, Mr. Mackintosh, Professor Hamilton, and Mr. Somerville; against the overture were Mr. Martin, Mr. Welsh, Dr. Dalgleish, Mr. Russell, the Lord Advocate, Dr. Macknight, the Lord President, and Professor Hill.—*Scots Magazine*, vol. lii., p. 352.

ing this business at a season peculiarly inauspicious, and the danger of agitating the public mind, and adopting prematurely and precipitantly any determinate measure with respect to an affair so weighty, and of such a delicate nature. I regret to say that the business at its outset had too much the aspect of a party question; for the overture was strenuously resisted by all the lay members of the General Assembly who were connected with Government, and supported keenly by those who were at that time hostile to the existing administration. The decision, carried by a great majority, was, that the Test Act was a grievance, and that a committee should be appointed to embrace the earliest opportunity to obtain redress by every legal and constitutional mode which they might judge to be most effectual. The success of our business in this early stage of it may in a great measure be imputed to the able advice, the zeal and activity of Sir Henry Moncreiff.* His authority with the popular clergy would alone have been sufficient to secure their suffrages; but, at the same time, I must in justice acknowledge that to his manly eloquence in the course of the debate,

* Born 1750, died 1827.

independent of party influence, may fairly be ascribed the conversion of many who entered the Assembly Hall with the predetermined purpose of opposing the overture.

The committee of the General Assembly, after many meetings, resolved to transmit a petition to Parliament, and to empower one or more of their number to take charge of it in London. It was an understanding that the latter duty should devolve upon me, chiefly because I had already been in communication with Sir Gilbert Elliot on the subject. That gentleman happening to arrive in the country soon after the meeting of the General Assembly, I had lost no time in communicating to him the resolutions which had been adopted relative to the Test Act, being anxious to obtain his attention to a business which I had so much at heart. He did not precipitately form any opinion on the question; but, after deliberate consideration, he declared himself fully convinced of the propriety of prosecuting the resolutions of the General Assembly, and was pleased to add that, on the condition of my presence and assistance, he would himself undertake the management of the business in Parliament.

In obedience to Sir G. Elliot's request, I set out for London, 28th February 1791. Sir Gilbert had intended to bring forward the petition of the committee immediately upon my arrival in London; but as a bill for relieving the Roman Catholics from certain penalties and disabilities to which they were subjected was still depending in the House of Commons, it was apprehended that the interference of our application might be made a handle for defeating or retarding the generous purpose of that bill. It was therefore judged advisable to postpone the petition. During the suspension of our business I had frequent interviews with Sir Gilbert Elliot, and, by his desire, furnished him with all the approved publications on religious liberty, toleration, and tests, and the historical facts bearing on these subjects. In the course of my inquiries and researches I was ably assisted by Mr. Johnstone, bookseller, St. Paul's Churchyard, who not only had an ample collection of publications on polemical theology, but, from his own knowledge, and the conversation of his customers, was well qualified to recommend such of them as were most worthy of perusal. His shop was daily frequented by the most respectable

dissenting ministers, particularly those of the Socinian or Unitarian class. Here I was introduced to Dr. Priestley,* who complimented me on the business that had brought me to London. He was just preparing to set out in the coach for Birmingham, so that our opportunity of conversation was short, which I had no reason to regret, because if it had been prolonged we should probably have been set at variance by the introduction of political subjects, which neither of us at that time were qualified to discuss with temper and moderation. Dr. Priestley's enthusiastic admiration of the first leaders of the French Revolution, who were declared enemies to Christianity and to every species of religion, and stained with unparalleled atrocities, appeared to me an evidence of insensibility or hardness of heart, which counterbalanced his scientific merit, and rendered his pretensions to religious principle suspicious and equivocal.

The interviews and conversations I had with Sir G. Elliot gave me a new insight into his character, and heightened my esteem of his talents and his virtues. Of his good taste, of his sagacity, of his comprehensive penetrating understanding, I

* Born 1733, died 1804.

had formed the highest opinion, but till now I did not know him to be capable of such intense application, such patient research, nor of being so feelingly interested in the success of a question which the generality of political men deemed of inferior concern.

After the field had been at length opened for the introduction of our business by Sir G. Elliot's intimation of his intended motion, I accompanied him in the ceremonious service of waiting on all the principal persons to whom it was thought necessary to explain the object of our petition, either in compliance with the common forms of courtesy, or in order to communicate information and satisfy their inquiries, with the view of obtaining their approbation and support. Mr. Pitt, the Archbishop of Canterbury,* and all the Scotch members were included in this description. Mr. Pitt was either abroad, or occupied in business when we made our call upon him, and did not receive us. With Mr. Dundas we had a long conversation. He frankly owned that with respect to the question, in an abstract view, there could be but one opinion, but, as the ministers, in business touching the interests of the church, had always paid a respect to its

* Dr. John Moore, who was translated from Bangor in 1783.

rulers, and Dr. Moore, the Archbishop, was averse to our petition, he wished it to be withdrawn at this time. He said to me, in a jocular way, "Doctor, I did not think you had been so illiberal. Would you scruple to take the sacrament in the Church of England, or to join in communion with its members?" To which I replied, "that I had no scruple of conscience to receive the sacrament at St. Paul's to-morrow, but that I would not do it as the condition of receiving and discharging my stipend." The Archbishop, who received us with great politeness, became reserved when we entered on the subject of the Test, and just said enough to make us expect that our petition would be resisted with the whole weight of ecclesiastical influence. We had not the opportunity of conversing with all the members from Scotland, but the greater part of those whom we saw promised to support the petition. I called repeatedly for Mr. Fox, at his house in Hill Street. He gave me a frank reception, and, in the course of our conversation, introduced pertinent questions relative to the constitution of the Church of Scotland, and the business in agitation. One of these questions was, "Who are the people whom you call

Seceders in Scotland—what are their discriminating tenets? I suppose they are of the same temper with the party in England called *Low Churchmen*, and you of the Establishment belong to the *High Church party*." I answered, "Quite the reverse. The Scotch Seceders are the High Church party, for they contend for maintaining the doctrines and discipline of the kirk, in all the strictness, and to all the extent established and practised in Scotland according to the directory of the Assembly of Divines in 1648;" and I added that, with his permission, I would furnish him with such documents as would contain an answer to his question in more explicit terms than I could employ. I called again in a few days with a copy of the Act and Testimony 1736, and also some of the fast-day sermons and tracts published at that time by the ministers who began the Secession, and were deemed the oracles of the sect, marking with the pencil the sentences which I wished him to notice, and I remember that he seemed to be much amused, and smiled while reading them. The passage which amused him the most was a description of the predominant national sins, and the judgments impending over the nation on that account;

and among the former the discontinuing prosecutions for witchcraft was expressly specified.*

I had several morning interviews with Sir William Pulteney, who appointed me to call upon him at an early hour, when I accompanied him in his usual walk in the park opposite the bath-house. He had promised to second Sir Gilbert Elliot's motion for relieving the members of the Church of Scotland from the obligation of the test; but having conceived a prejudice against the Seceders, he wished to narrow the proposition founded upon our memorial, in order to exclude them from

* In the "Act, Declaration, and Testimony," dated Perth, 3d December 1736, no reference appears to be made to the "national sin" of the non-prosecution of witches, though it will probably be found animadverted on in some of the pamphlets or sermons printed in the same year, when the repeal by the Parliament of the penal statutes against witchcraft (5th March 1736) is known to have excited popular opposition. An express denunciation of "the Witches' Bill" occurs, however, in a later "Testimony" by the same body, in 1743. (See it quoted in Carlyle's *Autobiography*, p. 10, *note*.) Among the other "defections" testified against in the documents in question, are such as these:—"That in the year 1712, an almost boundless toleration is granted;" "that countenance is given, by the authority of Parliament, to the observation of *holy days* in Scotland, by the vacation of our most considerable courts of justice in the latter end of December;" and "that the judicatories of this Church, and members thereof, are precluded from addressing the Honourable House of *Peers*, unless addresses are directed unto the *Lords Spiritual*, which is not agreeable to our known principles."—Ed.

partaking of the proposed indulgence. I expostulated and reasoned with him on the impropriety of making any exception, and its inconsistency with the very spirit and design of our application to Parliament, but only prevailed so far as to obtain his consent to abstain from any reference to a distinction of religious sects on the preliminary motion for leave to bring in the bill. Mr. Adam,* with whom I often consulted, was of eminent service, by his advice and the exertion of his influence with his political friends. He made out a written list of the House of Commons, distinguishing the members, as he calculated on their votes *for* or *against* the bill, or *doubtful*, which too obviously indicated defeat and disappointment. I carried on a constant correspondence with Sir Henry Moncreiff, and received from him full, precise, and judicious instructions with respect to the most expedient measures to be pursued, attending to every difficulty and objection likely to occur in the progress of our business. Sir Adam Ferguson [of Kilkerran]† gained upon my

* Afterwards Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court.

† He represented the county of Ayr in Parliament for eighteen, and the city of Edinburgh for four years; having been in the House of Commons altogether from 1774 to 1796.—Ed.

esteem and gratitude more than any individual I had the opportunity of conversing with while occupied in the discharge of the duty intrusted to me. He frankly acknowledged that he wished our application had been delayed to a more propitious time, but since it was to be brought forward, said he could not give a silent vote on the question, that he had always considered religious tests as unwarrantable and grievous, and would not let slip any opportunity of bearing his testimony against them, though on this occasion it would impose the disagreeable necessity of dividing with a minority in opposition to the sentiments of his political friends. The manly conscientious conduct of Sir Adam, the good sense and liberality of principle expressed by him in our conferences, and with great elegance and perspicuity in his speech on Sir Gilbert's motion in the House of Commons, have left upon my mind the most favourable impression of his understanding and integrity. To the English members, who had been distinguished by their attachment to the cause of religious liberty in the recent discussions occasioned by the petition of the Protestant Dissenters, and the repeal of the

statutes affecting the Roman Catholics, I had frequent access.

The last preliminary step was a confidential meeting of a few of our select friends at the house of Lord Malmesbury, on the 8th of May. The persons who attended were Sir Gilbert Elliot, Sir James St. Clair, now Lord Rosslyn,* Messrs. Adam, Fox, Erskine,† Anstruther,‡ Windham, and myself. The conversation was confined entirely to the subject of the petition, on which nothing new was introduced, except what related to the wording of the motion to be made by Sir Gilbert, the arrangement of the debate, and the opposition expected from particular members on the ministerial side of the house.

Very trifling incidents acquire interest when they illustrate character, or relate to celebrated men. I remember I was amused with observing, that while Mr. Fox's countenance indicated profound attention to all that was said, his fingers

* The second Earl, who succeeded his uncle, Lord Chancellor Loughborough, and died in 1837.

† The Hon. Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine. Born 1748, died 1823.

‡ Sir John Anstruther, afterwards Chief Justice of Bengal. Died in 1811.

were incessantly in motion, catching the drops that fell from the wax candles, and turning and forming them into little pellets. Mr. Erskine once and again rose from his seat mentioning the burden of business that was in his hands, and the necessity he was under of leaving the company, naming the number of briefs on which he must be prepared to plead next morning in the Courts at Westminster. The number I do not now recollect, but it was so enormous that, after he had left the company, I could not help expressing my surprise. Mr. Windham replied, "You are not to believe all that Mr. Erskine says;" and the other gentlemen smiled.

I attended the House of Commons on the day of the debate. Sir Gilbert Elliot began his speech with an account of the origin of the overture, and did great honour to Dr. Charters and myself by bearing testimony to our characters, both in our professional and general conduct, and insisted particularly on the purity of our motives in agitating the business now brought under the consideration of the legislature. He concluded a speech replete with solid argument, by moving that the House should immediately resolve itself

into a committee, to consider how far the provisions of the Test Act extended, or ought to extend, to persons born in Scotland. The motion was seconded by Sir William Pulteney. Sixty-two voted for it, and one hundred and twenty against it. The principal speakers in support of our petition were, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Sir Adam Ferguson, Mr. Anstruther, Sir William Pulteney, and Mr. Fox. In opposition to it, Mr. Dundas, the Lord Advocate, and Mr. Pitt.

There are few actions of my life which have been more misunderstood and misrepresented, and few also that have afforded me more solid pleasure on reflection, than the endeavours I used, however unsuccessfully, to obtain the repeal of the test. I have always considered it as not less injurious to religion than to sound policy. Ever since the dawn of reason, and the earliest attention I was capable of exercising on any subject of a serious nature, I have considered the blending religious tests with civil institutions as an intrusion into consecrated ground, and a gross profanation of sacred things. The Lord's supper was appointed to be a memorial of the death of Christ, and the qualification essential to a worthy

participation in it, is faith in Him as the Redeemer. How daring and impious the compelling any person solemnly to profess the remembrance of the death of Christ who may not even be a believer in his divine authority, and may not, perhaps, wish to be so considered! The ground of objection to the Test Act is not confined to any particular sect, or party of Christians. It ought to have the same force with every enlightened Christian, of whatever Church he professes himself a member—whether he be Episcopalian or Presbyterian. The Test Act is a daring usurpation upon the authority of Christ, and, though it were but a dead letter and never enforced, it ought to be repealed, in order to rescue the British code from the awful guilt of sacrilege.

Although our application for the repeal of the sacrament test was not attended with success, yet I have reason for being persuaded that salutary effects, in a moral view, have resulted from bringing this subject under the view of the legislature. There has not, perhaps, a single instance of the enforcement of the statute occurred since; which may be fairly imputed to a secret and growing conviction of its injustice, the result of the dis-

cussion of the question on this and similar occasions.* It was truly observed by Mr. Fox in the course of the debate, that the cause of toleration and religious liberty, though resisted and apparently vanquished, would always be acquiring accumulated strength, as often as it was brought under the attention of the public.†

The foresight of my journey to London had stimulated my exertions in bringing my work forward to such an advanced state as to allow me to avail myself of so favourable an opportunity of taking steps for its publication. I had submitted the finished parts of my manuscript to the inspection of several of my literary friends in Edinburgh best qualified to judge and decide on its merits; and the approbation which it met with raised my hopes of success to a pitch beyond what I had

* There had till then been many recent instances of its enforcement. I was informed by trustworthy persons in London, that, within the time of their remembrance, a disreputable curate with a dirty surplice used to be in waiting at stated hours, daily, (I think in St. Martin's Chapel), provided with communion elements, to be administered to those persons in office who had occasion to receive the wages or pay due to them from Government.

† The Test Act was repealed by an act (9th Geo. IV., cap. 17) passed 9th May 1828, entitled, "An Act for Repealing so much of several Acts as Impose the Necessity of Receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a Qualification for certain Offices and Employments.

before presumed to indulge. Professor Dugald Stewart was highly pleased with the design and the cast of sentiment developed in the few chapters I read to him, and said that the book deserved to be popular. Dr. Robertson's testimony was, above all, encouraging. He said that, like Garrick, he often found himself in the disagreeable predicament of giving offence to candidates for authorship, by declining his patronage and recommendation after gratifying them with the inspection of their manuscripts; but that he thought so well of my History, that it would give him pleasure to render me all the service in his power when I was ready for publication. He asked me what sum I expected from the booksellers; and, upon my mentioning £300, he said it was too moderate, that I ought to make my stand at £500, and that he could almost assure me of obtaining that sum from Messrs. Strahan and Cadell, to whom he would recommend the publication, in a joint letter with Dr. Blair, who coincided with his opinion of its merit. A few days after my arrival in London, I sent my credentials from these respectable patrons, and a copy of my Introduction to Messrs. Strahan and

Cadell, and received soon after a note desiring me to wait on them at an appointed hour, and to furnish them with such parts of the manuscript as were fit for exhibition. The whole work was now in a legible form, though some parts of it were not in that correct state to which I undertook to bring it before entering the press. After my manuscript had passed through the ordeal of critical inquisition under the eyes of their advisers, I concluded my bargain with Messrs. Strahan and Cadell pleasantly, and in a few words. They said that £500, the sum specified, was too large for the work of an unknown author, and more than Dr. Robertson had received for his first publication, but that they would consent to my demand on the following conditions, viz.—£300 to be paid on the publication of the first edition, to consist of 700 copies; and £200 on the publication of the second edition.

My residence in London at this time was highly gratifying, not only from the pleasing intercourse I enjoyed with my old friends and acquaintances, but as it introduced me to persons of rank and character to whom I was before unknown. My beloved friend Consul Davidson, now married, had taken up house at Twickenham, and

I spent many delightful hours in his company there and in London. When at Twickenham, I enjoyed a melancholy pleasure in visiting the house of the celebrated poet, Mr. Pope; and the tombs which he had erected to the memory of his mother and of an old nurse to whom he was attached. One old man only survived of the multitude who had been spectators of his funeral. He told Mr. Davidson that the body, in compliance with Mr. Pope's instructions, had been brought by water to the nearest approach to the churchyard on the Thames, and from thence carried on the shoulders of twelve poor men to the grave, each receiving a premium for this service.

Messrs. Strahan and Cadell introduced me to the acquaintance of some of the most celebrated literary men then in London. Colonel Fullarton,* Mr. Seward,† Serjeant Runnington,‡ a Mr. Johnston

* William Fullarton of Fullarton, F.R.S., author of *A View of the English Interests in India*, etc He accompanied Mr. Brydone in his tour through Sicily and Malta, in 1770.—Ed.

† Probably William Seward, Esq. F.R.S. (born 1747, died 1799), the author of *Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons*, and other biographical works; who was then well known in literary society in London.

‡ Editor of *Ruffhead's Statutes at Large*, 10 vols. 4to; Sir M. Hales' *History of the Common Law*, etc.—Ed.

from Ireland, Mr. Home the poet, Mr. Mackenzie* from Edinburgh, and others I have forgot, composed the parties I met with at their dinners. Their entertainments were the most elegant and splendid I had ever seen before.

At the house of Mr. Murray, bookseller in Fleet Street, I had the good fortune, so far as it tended to gratify my curiosity, to meet frequently Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcot),† then in great celebrity upon account of the vivacity, wit, and eccentric originality of his poetical compositions. As he declined playing at cards, I usually engrossed his conversation while the rest of Mr. Murray's guests were occupied in that amusement. Peter told me that he had three hobbies, poetry, painting, and metaphysics; and, with respect to the last, in which I suspected his attainments to be superficial, he said he had been deeply indebted to the writings of David Hume and Adam Smith, for whom he entertained a profound veneration. The complimentary style in which he spoke of Scottish authors, and Scotsmen in general, made me suspect that he was no stranger to the art of flattery.

* "The Man of Feeling." Born 1745, died 1831.

† Born 1738, died 1819.

There appeared, however, in his conversation at table, such a mixture of ribaldry, buffoonery, and obscene allusions, as coincided exactly with my preconceptions of this too much admired writer. On one of the occasions that I met Dr. Wolcot, after vaunting of the patronage of the Duke of Cumberland, he recited and mimicked a conversation he had had with his Royal Highness behind the scenes in the play-house. He had composed an epilogue to be spoken by one of the actors, and the Duke wishing to see it, attempted to wrest from him the manuscript he held in his hands. Peter resisted, saying, "Your Royal Highness *cannot read it.*" The Duke turned away, expressing himself in great wrath, which Peter repeated, mimicking his attitude and voice. The pleasantry consisted in this, that the Duke of Cumberland was supposed to be deficient in the elementary branches of education. Dr. Wolcot, who had been originally educated for the medical profession, told me that he had also officiated as a clergyman in Jamaica; and had I encouraged him, he seemed inclined to make the clerical duties a subject of profane jocularity. He offered me a season ticket to the opera, at that time per-

formed in the Pantheon; but, however fond of amusement, I disdained to be laid under an obligation to a person whom I so much despised.

Considering the exemplary virtues of the king, with the candour from which we never ought to depart in judging of characters, the notorious dissoluteness of the poet, and the alarming danger arising from the temper of the times, I have often been shocked at the indifference, and much more at the applause with which many of my acquaintances, of whose virtue and patriotism I had entertained a favourable opinion, have been accustomed to speak of the modern Pindar. No talents can expiate the total absence of moral decorum; but talents prostituted to the depreciation and ridicule of decency, and to the dissolution of all the bands of social order, call for the execration of every well-wisher of mankind.

I spent two days at Windsor with Dr. Douglas,* Bishop of Carlisle, in compliance with a polite invitation, which made me expect a different reception from what I met with. Dr. Carlyle of Inveresk† had introduced me to him. I was instructed

* Born 1721, died 1813.

† Born 1722, died 1805. For some account of Bishop Douglas, see Dr. Carlyle's own *Autobiography*, pp. 338, etc.

by his literary communications, but his manner was cold and reserved, and some of his observations on points most interesting to myself, were far from being encouraging. He told me that he disliked the business on which I had been sent to London, that the Test Act was only an imaginary grievance, and that he believed the objections made to it proceeded from a party spirit.

I had been warmly recommended by Sir Gilbert Elliot to Mr. Burke, with whom, as already mentioned, I had spent a few days at Minto.* He declined seeing any part of my manuscript, softening his refusal by pleading the hurry of public business and the prospect of reading it with pleasure after publication, when he retired to his country quarters. I had learned from Sir Gilbert Elliot that, from prudential reasons, Mr. Burke had determined to take no part in the debate on the question of the test; but I was surprised at his marked disapprobation of our application to Parliament. He said, attentive as he had ever been to the temper and interests of communities, civil and religious, in every part of the United Kingdoms, he never heard the Test

* See above, p. 220.

Act complained of, and never expected that an application for the repeal of it would have come from the clergy of the Church of Scotland, who on former occasions appeared culpably obsequious to all the measures of Government. When I hinted at his laudable zeal in the cause of the Roman Catholics, he said that they had been long subjected to cruel privations, and had endured positive persecution from the laws as they stood, which justified their application to the legislature for deliverance, and no wonder that they had not supplicated the legislature ineffectually. A predominating dread of innovation seemed to engross all Mr. Burke's thoughts and feelings at this time. When he spoke of the French Revolution he grew warm and animated. He shewed me a few letters which he had lately received from France, giving an account of the multiplied atrocities arising from the dissolution of the Government.

Sir Gilbert Elliot proposed to do me the honour of introducing me to the Prince of Wales, but thought it prudent to delay that ceremony till the conclusion of the test business. From the indisposition of the Prince, I was afterwards told

that it would be necessary to prolong my stay in town for a few days, when Mr. Sheridan,* on Sir Gilbert Elliot's retiring to the country, would present me to His Royal Highness. I did not think this honour of such value as to compensate for the prolongation of absence from my family. I had been introduced to Mr. Sheridan by Mr. Ellis, whom I had seen at Minto, and was amused with his wit and pleasantry during my short interview. I was greatly charmed with the sweetness of Mrs. Sheridan.† Mr. Sheridan praised our application for deliverance from the test, and promised his aid, but did not shew face in the house when the business came under discussion. Nor did his absence disappoint me; for when calculating on the number of our friends, Sir Gilbert Elliot said that he could not count on Sheridan.

I have omitted to mention that the first Sunday after my arrival in town I went to the Tabernacle, in Moorfields, to hear the funeral sermon of John Wesley, the celebrated Methodist preacher, who had died a few days before. The chapel was so crowded that it was impossible to

* Richard Brinsley Sheridan, born 1751, died 1816.

† Miss Linley. She died in the following year.

pass the threshold. I had had the pleasure of a long interview with Mr. Wesley in June 1790, in the house of Dr. Douglas of Kelso,* and having promised to visit him in London, I had been indulging the hope of seeing more of this excellent man on the occasion of my present visit. When I met him at Kelso, he was on his way south from Edinburgh, where he had been during the sittings of the General Assembly. He had attended he told me some of the most interesting debates, which he liked "very ill indeed," saying there was too much heat and animosity. Some of his conversation was extravagant enough. On my asking him if he had seen Farmer's *Essay on Demoniacs*, then recently published, I recollect his answer was, "No sir, I shall never open the book. Why should a man attend to arguments against possessions of the devil, who has seen so many of them as I have seen." He also told a strange story regarding his visit to the natives when in America. Some of his American friends, he said, had with tears entreated him to abandon an

* Christopher Douglas, M.D. The visit of Mr. Wesley to Kelso, in 1790, is not mentioned in his published *Journals*; but for a previous visit, in 1782, when he was in like manner the guest of Dr. Douglas, see p. 780.—Ed.

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enterprise of so much danger. "But," he added, "I had a supernatural assurance of safety; and the moment I did enter the territory of the savages, a wild Indian, regarding me with a friendly countenance, approached and embraced me; he never from that moment quitted my person, watched me while I slept, and like a guardian angel protected me from all danger." When we were about to retire to our bed-rooms, Wesley said, "Let us part with a short word of prayer." I was charmed with his prayer, which breathed a spirit of fervent devotion and charity, and expressed a devout hope that though travelling by different roads, we should all meet in the New Jerusalem. It was so ordered that we should not meet again in this world.

I returned to Jedburgh on the 15th of May, and next day set out for Edinburgh to give a written report at the bar of the General Assembly, of the ill-success of our application to Parliament, which I believe was acceptable to the generality of the members, as the leaders of the church and men in power had exerted their utmost influence to secure the election of their friends, and to oppose any motion for the renewal of our application.

CHAPTER VII.

1791-1796.

MY History of Political Transactions in the reign of King William* was published early in the year 1792. It was attended to by all the Reviews within a few months after publication, and met with so favourable a reception from the greater number of them, and particularly from the Monthly Review, and the London Review (the two Reviews at that time most in repute), as to excite hopes of a more rapid sale than the work in fact obtained.

The pride and self-conceit of authors naturally stimulate their ingenuity in discovering every reason for the neglect of their productions but that which is most commonly the true one. Nor

* History of Political Transactions and of Parties, from the Restoration of King Charles II., to the Death of King William III. London, 1792. 4to.

do I claim exemption from the infirmities of my order, when I venture to mention as one probable cause of the disappointment of my own expectations, as well as those of my ablest friends, in regard to the success of my first literary effort, the coincidence of its publication with the horrors of the French Revolution, which not only diverted the public attention from every other subject, but made the very name of revolution, for the time, odious. I had, however, another and a purer source of comfort under any mortification I might feel on this account, in the gratifying testimonies of approval which I received from persons to whose good opinion I attached the highest value. Of those who wrote me in the most flattering terms on this occasion many were previously unknown to me personally, as Mr. Malcolm Laing,* Archdeacon Coxe* (who, along with his own opinion, communicated that of Lord Orford, expressed in the same terms as have since been published),‡ Lord Hardwicke, Mr. Steuart of Allan-

* Author of a *History of Scotland, from the Union of the Crowns to the Union of the Kingdoms*, etc. Born 1762, died 1818.

† Born 1747, died 1828. Author of *The History of the House of Austria*, and other well-known historical works.

‡ "Lord Orford changed his opinion upon this subject" [that "no

ton,* Lord Lonsdale,† and Lord Mountmorres.‡ In the correspondence with Lord Mountmorres, to which my publication gave rise, his Lordship's encomiums were indeed so extravagant, that however much I may have been pleased with them, I have never shewn any of his letters even to my most confidential friends. The more temperate expressions of esteem contained in the letters of such men as Principal Robertson, Dr. Blair, and Professor Dugald Stewart, were in a still greater degree gratifying and encouraging to me. Nor am I without reasons for believing that my first publication and its successor have continued to be fully appreciated by persons addicted to historical researches, and qualified to estimate the services of previous labourers in the same department. My authority has been referred to with

Scot was worthy of being the historian of William"], "after reading the accurate, impartial, and elegant History of Dr. Somerville, which he always declared to be the most faultless account yet given of any interesting period of our history; and added, that its perfect impartiality would ever prevent its being popular."—*Works of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford* (1798), vol. v., p. 561.—Ed.

* Henry Steuart of Allanton, LL.D., author of an annotated translation of the *Works of Sallust*, 2 vols. 4to. 1806.—Ed.

† Sir James Lowther, first Earl of Lonsdale.

‡ Henry Redmond, second Viscount, who died in 1797.

due respect by every later writer* who has entered into the transactions of the period of which I have treated, with the exception of Mr. Fox.

It is needless to go at length into the reasons of this exception. Mr. Fox's sentiments on political transactions preceding the revolution of 1688 (with the exception of his ascribing the infatuation of James in imperilling the throne to the lust of arbitrary power more than to a bigoted zeal for the Roman Catholic religion),† accords so entirely with mine, that if my work had been posterior in date to his History, I should not have escaped the charge of servile plagiarism. I was, therefore, not a little surprised to find my name included in the passage in his letter to Mr. Laing, in which he speaks of Mr. Laing's History of Scotland as serving "to counteract the mischiefs which Hume, Dalrymple, Macpherson, Somerville, and others of his countrymen had done;"‡ and at first supposed that he had not read my history, and must have condemned it by inadvertence.

* It may be added that, thirty years after this was written, Professor Smyth of Cambridge refers to Dr. Somerville's *William III.* as, "on the whole, the best History of the Reign we as yet have."—*Lectures on Modern History*, 4th ed., 1843. Vol. i., p. 17.—Ed.

† *History of James II.*, by the Right Hon. C. J. Fox (1808), p. 102. —Ed.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

Lord Holland, who afterwards assured me that I was mistaken in this conjecture, also by some of his expressions gave me reason to suspect the true explanation to be, that my sentiments on political transactions—not at the era of the Revolution, but in our own times—had, notwithstanding the obscurity of my position, drawn me within the vortex of party resentment. I will only add, that Mr. Fox's disapprobation of my History could not be greater than the disappointment with which I read his own. Even the style of that posthumous publication is unworthy of Mr. Fox; and upon the whole, whatever may now be said by its blind admirers, had his friends been influenced by a proper respect for his reputation, nothing should have induced them to associate his name with a work which, in after times, must place the author in a lower class of literary celebrity than the world was prepared to expect from the brilliancy of his conversation, his classical taste and erudition, and the rhetorical powers which justly raised him to so lofty a pre-eminence in the judgment of all his contemporaries.*

* For a confirmation, to a considerable extent, of this view of Mr. Fox's historical work, see Lord Macaulay's *Essays*, vol. ii., p. 54-57.—Ed.

I had frequent opportunities of waiting upon Sir William Pulteney during his residence in Edinburgh at this time. He was anxious to obtain access to any books or manuscripts that were likely to throw light on the history of the Annandale family, expecting to find documents to sustain the claim of his own family to some of the titles enjoyed by the Marquess of Annandale, lately deceased. He was a man to whom I felt myself very deeply indebted for the great interest he had taken in the professional advancement of one of my sons. Sir William Pulteney's character has been misunderstood and undervalued by those to whom he was known only superficially, and who formed their opinion from the temper and habits he discovered in reference to his personal accommodation and household economy. His apparent expenditure was considered as shamefully penurious compared with the amplitude of his fortune, and his carefulness in personal and domestic expenses was so paltry and sordid as to become proverbial. But with all this narrowness, his beneficence—often voluntary and unsolicited—surpassed the example of most of his contemporaries who had acquired the greatest celebrity for the

munificence and extent of their generosity. I was informed by Mr. Alison of the Excise Office, one of Sir William's confidential agents in works of charity, that after he became opulent he had always a large sum afloat in benevolent speculations. He ever shewed an anxious attention to find out genius and talents languishing in circumstances of obscurity and neglect, that he might furnish the means of bringing them into notice. I believe all the sons of Mr. Malcolm, Burnfoot,* with others I could name, were introduced into the career of prosperity by the patronage of Mr. Pulteney. In this branch of benevolence he had the opportunity of verifying and illustrating the admonition of the wise man:—"Cast thy bread on the waters, and it will return to thee after many days;" for he enjoyed the satisfaction of receiving the most pleasing testimonies of the personal gratitude of many of his protegees, afterwards celebrated for public services which were the fruits of the talents fostered and matured under his beneficent patronage. Sir William's con-

* See the *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B.* Burnfoot, the birthplace of this distinguished officer, and of his hardly less eminent brothers, was then a farm in the neighbourhood of Langholm.—Ed.

tributions, likewise, to schemes of public utility, and his private charities, were liberal and well chosen ; and he was justly considered as one of the most useful members of society in his own time. Sir William Pulteney sat in the House of Commons for several successive Parliaments, and acquired high reputation on account of his knowledge and attention to public business. He never attached himself to any party, nor solicited or accepted any ministerial office. He often took a share in the parliamentary debates, and every party gave him credit for the sincerity of his sentiments, and the purity and disinterestedness of his motives. His speeches were not animated or splendid, but always replete with sound good sense and constitutional information. Upon questions of a more interesting nature, and upon occasions singularly critical, Sir William published his opinions, which always produced an impression on the public mind. His pamphlet on Mr. Fox's Bill for regulating the government of our East India colonies,* was believed to have contributed to the unpopularity of that measure among the directors, and increased

* *The Effects to be Expected from the East India Bill.* Lond., 1784. —Ed.

the strength of the party who opposed it, under the auspices of Mr. Pitt.

I had taken a deep interest in the question relative to the abolition of the slave trade, agitated in the preceding session of Parliament, 1791, which now began to engage the attention of all ranks in every part of the country. I was happy in obtaining the consent of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale to adopt a petition I had prepared, expressive of our earnest wishes that it might please the legislature to abolish that infamous traffic. The resolution of the House of Commons in the succeeding session, April 1792, to abolish the slave trade at the end of six years, I considered as a pledge of ultimate success; and, though I wished that its operation had been more speedy, yet I charitably believed that certain previous arrangements might be necessary, in order to accomplish this good work with a regard to justice and the safety of the colonists.

A sermon I preached at this time on the subject was afterwards published by the suggestion of my friend Dr. Charters, but gave great offence to some of the gentlemen in the country, who uncharitably imputed it to those spreading seditious

principles, which at that time were the occasion of just alarm to all the friends of order and peace.

I need hardly say that nothing could be farther from the truth. At the commencement of the French Revolution I had too precipitately expressed my wishes for its success, and hailed it as the dawn of a glorious day of universal liberty and happiness; nor were my sentiments changed by Mr. Burke's eloquent publication, which, when I first read it, appeared to me to contain the ranting declamations of aristocratic pride and exuberant genius, rather than to flow from the dictates of sober reflection, and a sound and liberal understanding. The atrocities committed in Paris in August and September 1792 opened my eyes, and converted my joy into bitterness and sorrow; and the persons whom I had admired and praised as the models of patriotic virtue and the benefactors of the human race, became the objects of my detestation and abhorrence. To those to whom I am not intimately known, it would appear mere affectation were I to describe the grief, the agonizing sensations which preyed on my heart, and how deeply my happiness was invaded by those tragical events which were the first results of the French

Revolution. They entirely engrossed my thoughts, haunted my imagination with frightful dreams during the night, and rendered me fretful and unfit for business during the day. I was perhaps blameably offended, because many of my friends did not enter into my sentiments and feelings. I was vexed and irritated to observe with what indifference and coldness the basest actions and the most flagitious crimes were mentioned in promiscuous company and in the ordinary course of conversation. It mortified me to think that the feelings of humanity were so faint and languid, and often altogether wanting, in many of my countrymen. Execrable, above all, in my estimation, were those hypocritical professors of philantropy, who, upon the chimerical computation of distant and more extensive good, could harbour in their bosoms any inclination to extenuate the guilt, and diminish the horror, of those unparalleled atrocities which, in our own times, have stamped an indelible stain upon human nature. Although the war with France had not been justifiable and necessary, as I believe it to have been, on the ground of righteous self-defence, yet the tendency of the principles adopted by the National Assem-

bly upon the very outset of their deliberations; the enormities which daily resulted from them; the approbation of these principles, and the vindication of these enormities, shamelessly avowed by members of the British legislature, and which were spreading and fermenting in the minds of the populace, imposed upon every neighbouring state a moral obligation for lifting up the standard of hostility against the revolutionary armies of France. The safety of all surrounding nations was at stake. The very existence of civil society was in danger.

Under these impressions I felt it to be my duty, and a gratification to the best affections of my heart, to counteract, as far as I was able within my narrow sphere of influence, the diffusive contamination of anarchical principles. I dedicated a great proportion of my time to visiting the families of my parishioners, and exerted myself, by simple arguments adapted to their capacities, and by kind expostulations, to guard them against delusions destructive of their present and future happiness. But the misrepresentations, falsehoods, and libellous attacks on the constitution and Government, circulated among the lower orders of the people with address and industry seldom

exemplified in the cause of truth and righteousness, rendered all my exertions unprofitable and fruitless, and lessened my authority and usefulness in the discharge of my ordinary professional duty. There were few even of better rank and education who were not affected in some degree with the plausibility of the accusations brought against our excellent constitution.

The treasonable correspondence, however, carried on by individuals and associated bodies in Britain with the revolutionary demagogues in Paris, the exuberance of calamities and crimes raging there, overt acts of sedition committed by British subjects, and the declaration of war against England by the National Assembly, at length concurred to open the eyes of every person possessed of the smallest spark of humanity and patriotism, and to justify those spirited measures, to which, under the blessing of Providence, we are indebted for deliverance from dangers beyond all comparison the most gigantic and formidable that ever occurred in the annals of Britain. To the memory of Mr. Pitt, the veneration and gratitude of every patriotic citizen is due to the latest generations.

My own sentiments and feelings with respect to the French Revolution were published in two pamphlets, one at the beginning, the other at the end of the year 1793.* Both of them were well received. Dr. Robertson was pleased to express his approbation of the first in the most flattering terms. He died before the publication of the second.

Encouraged by the patronage of persons of distinguished station and literature, I determined, in the course of the year 1792, to resume my historical pursuits. The continuation of my subject in a periodical progression, by carrying on the history of political transactions from the death of King William, in conformity to the plan of my former work, naturally occurred to me as the most proper arrangement. By some of my friends, however, I was advised to extend my design, and to make the history of the period on which I was now to enter more general and comprehensive. Dr. Robertson, whose judgment and experience entitled his advice to implicit obedience, expressed his opinion in jocular terms: "John Bull," he said,

* "Observations on the Constitution and Present State of Britain." Lond., 1793; and "The Effects of the French Revolution." Edin., 1793.

"was so fond of battles, and so proud of the military fame acquired under the generalship of the Duke of Marlborough, that he would not endure an history that did not make them the prominent theme of that era." I urged my incapacity to understand and to make others understand military transactions. "Read," said he, "the most celebrated authors of the time who professedly treat of battles, and tell your tale in your own language, and there can be no doubt of your book being understood and well received." I acted upon these suggestions, though at the cost of much labour. To shorten my narrative in this department, and to render it more interesting, I laid it down as a rule to attend chiefly to the military operations in which the British armies were engaged, to specify the most probable causes of victory or defeat, and to ascertain the balance of success at the end of each campaign. Colonel Fullarton and Colonel Dirom,* who were good enough to read my accounts of Marlborough's campaigns in manuscript—the latter minutely compar-

* Deputy Adjutant-General of H.M. Forces in India, and the author of *A Narrative of the Campaign in India which Terminated the War with Tippoo Sultan in* 1792," etc.—Ed.

ing them with the works of contemporary military historians—gave me the assurance that I had in every case succeeded in furnishing a faithful and intelligible history of the leading events of the war. From the beginning of 1793, I devoted myself with indefatigable industry to the prosecution of my design; and, to provide materials for this purpose, made large demands on all the public and private collections from which I had the privilege of drawing books or manuscripts.

I have referred to Dr. Robertson's advice to me, not to confine myself to political matters in my history of Anne. On the same occasion (in September 1792), we had a long and interesting discussion on other topics connected with my proposed publication; and I may here transcribe from my common-place book two or three extracts from the memoranda of our conversation, which I happen to have preserved.

With respect to the Union, he seemed scrupulous about giving any opinion, but agreed with me that it was against the sense of the nation at that time. Upon my saying that it might naturally have been expected that the scanty representation from Scotland would be absorbed in the

mass of the English representation, especially in any question of conflicting interest between the two countries; he said that this was the more to be feared on account of the disadvantages under which our members suffered immediately after the Union. The want of the English language, and their uncouth manners, were much against them. None of them were men of parts, and they never opened their lips but on Scottish business, and then said little. The late Lord Onslow* said to him, "Dr. Robertson, they were odd-looking dull men. I remember them well; there were no Sir Gilbert Elliots and Mr. Oswalds† among them." The Principal added, from himself, that Sir David Dalrymple,‡ grandfather of the present Lord Hailes, and Mr. Murray,§ a brother

* This must have been Thomas, third Baron Onslow, unless the Speaker (Arthur) Onslow, who filled the Chair of the House of Commons from 1727 to 1761, and died in 1768, is the authority here meant to be referred to. His son was the fourth Baron.—Ed.

† James Oswald of Dunnikier was elected member for the Kirkcaldy district of burghs in 1741, and filled successively the situations of Commissioner of the Navy, Member of the Board of Trade, Lord of the Treasury, and Treasurer of Ireland. See Burton's *Life of David Hume*, vol. i., p. 156.—Ed.

‡ He was member for Culross, and Lord Advocate.—Ed.

§ "James Murray, M.P. for Elgin, 1710, a Commissioner of Trade with France, died at Avignon, æt. 80, 1770."—*Sharpe's Peerage*.—Ed.

of Lord Mansfield, who afterwards joined the Pretender in 1715, were the first able men, as representatives, sent from Scotland after the Union. Of the last he spoke in terms of high commendation as a man of great abilities, an eloquent speaker, and one who had had the advantage of an English education. I said that I thought John Duke of Argyle* was an exception to the censure he had expressed. He replied that he referred to members of the House of Commons, that the Duke of Argyle had attended theatres, and read plays much, forming his style upon them, and was a polished rather than able speaker.

Speaking of Whigs and Tories in the reign of Queen Anne, he said there could be no doubt that the principal men among the Whigs (the professed Whigs) were Tories, and the Tories Whigs. Marlborough and Godolphin were Tories in principle, and Harley and Bolingbroke Whigs.† He

* Born 1678, died 1743.

† See Somerville's *Queen Anne*, p. 587, and *note*. The view of the state of parties in this reign, which, as now appears, had been taken by Principal Robertson in 1792, has, it is well known, found an able exponent in a more recent historian. "At that period," writes Lord Stanhope, "the two great contending parties were distinguished, as at present, by the nicknames of Whig and Tory. But it is very remarkable that, in Queen Anne's reign, the relative meaning of these terms was not only

added that he could not have the least doubt that the Tories—those who were avowedly and reputedly such—were the better men; that the conduct of the Whig ministers was most profligate, in continuing the war after the French king had offered to grant everything that was the object of it; that it was certain they never could by a continuance of the war obtain better terms than might have been obtained after the campaign of 1706, if terms equally good; that the obvious reason for protracting the war was the preserving their own power, and securing gain for themselves to the ruin of the nation; and that this conduct deserved the marked censure of the historian. When I spoke of the conduct of the Tories in making a tool of Sacheverel as mean and infamous, he said it was no more than what every party out of power had done and would always do—the same

different, but opposite to that which they bore at the accession of William the Fourth. . . . . On examination, it will be found that, in nearly all particulars, a modern Tory resembles a Whig of Queen Anne's reign, and a Tory of Queen Anne's reign a modern Whig."—*History of England from the Peace of Utrecht*. Second edition, vol. i., p. 7. See also "some instances of this remarkable counterchange" in the Appendix to the volume, p. xcii. For the arguments on the other side, the reader may be referred to Lord Macaulay's review (*Essays*, vol. i., pp. 547-549) of the same author's History of the War of the Succession in Spain.—Ed.

thing indeed having happened in our own day in the case of Wilkes. With regard to another remark of mine on the same subject—namely, that Sacheverel's trial had undoubtedly occasioned the subversion of the interest of the Whig ministry; for the Queen, who was a bigot to Episcopacy, hearing in person the pleadings, caught the alarm of the Church being in danger,—he said he believed she was no less afraid of danger to her own prerogative than to the Church, and that after all the Whig principles were imperfectly brought out in the course of that trial, which had ever been the case when explanations of this kind had been left to lawyers. Their minds were narrowed by their profession. He mentioned, as examples, their wrangling about the abdication, at the time of the settlement of the crown upon King William, and of late the dangerous doctrine defended by Mr. Erskine, that impeachments ceased upon the dissolution of Parliament, which he said would destroy the constitution, by putting an end to the responsibility of ministers. With reference to the intentions of the Tory ministry to bring in the Pretender after the death of the Queen, he referred me to a pamphlet written by Winnington in the

reign of George the Second, which, he said, throws more light on that matter than any other publication he had seen.

Of Lord Oxford, Dr. Robertson spoke more highly than I could yet venture to do, saying he was not only one of the ablest men of his time, but that he was honest; and when I mentioned my having formed a very favourable opinion of the abilities of the Duke of Portland, he replied, "You may be assured that he was an able man, because King William employed him so much,"—a proof how highly he estimated William's discernment of character.

We had some talk also about Gilbert Stuart. Dr. Robertson spoke with just indignation of that notorious writer's treatment of himself. He said, "Every man who has written history knows that the most difficult part of his work has been the arrangement, but Gilbert Stuart saved himself that trouble, and followed my arrangement exactly. His dissertations on the middle ages were also stolen from me; but what above all was detestable, at a time when I was fighting for a cause so sacred as religious liberty, he concluded his History of the Reformation with reflections evidently in-

tended to expose me to popular odium and personal danger."*

In the summer of 1793, I accompanied Mr. Robson and his wife on a jaunt to Buxton, where he had been advised to spend a few weeks for the benefit of his health. We travelled slowly in Mr. Robson's carriage, with his own horses, never performing more than three stages in a day. At the house of Mrs. Silverstop, formerly Mrs. Ormiston, a lady famed no less for piety than beauty, I was introduced to Mr. Cole, a Roman Catholic priest, who, at the age of ninety-four, retained all his mental faculties, together with an amenity and frankness of manners which excited my veneration. He told me that he had a distinct recollection of seeing the waggons sent to

* The reference here is to the proposed extension to Scotland of the repeal of the penal laws against Roman Catholics, which occasioned the riots of 1779 (see *supra*, p. 193). Dr. Robertson, who had advocated the repeal, was, in fact, exposed to the imminent hazard of being torn to pieces by the mob. "After repeated outrages," says his biographer, "committed in different parts of the city, a furious populace threatened an attack on his house, and were only restrained by a military force from sacrificing his life to their vengeance."—*Life of Robertson*, p. 177. Stuart's bitter personal hostility to the historian amounted almost to monomania, and is even said (Kerr's *Life of Smellie*, vol. ii., p. 2,) to have found horrible expression in some of the last words he spoke on his deathbed.—Ed.

Scotland with the equivalent money stipulated by the Union,* passing through Northumberland, guarded by a troop of Dragoons, and followed by an immense multitude hissing and execrating the profusion of their rulers for conciliating their ancient and most inveterate enemies by such a costly bribe, taken out of their pockets. We travelled by Leeds, where we spent a day, and attended the cloth market, noted for the celerity of the sales, and the good order observed while they are transacting. We were met there by Mr. Walker, an opulent farmer and wool-stapler, who invited us to pass a few days in his house at Honley, which we did.

I was well pleased with the old-fashioned customs observed in the household economy of

* The fifteenth of the Articles of the Union provided that "Scotland shall have an equivalent for what she shall be charged towards payment of the debts of England, namely—the sum of £398,085, for the custom and excise to which she will be liable for the said debts . . . . the said £398,085 to be applied to pay the public debts of Scotland; to refund to the African Company (the Darien Scheme) their principal stock, and the interest of it; to idemnify such as may be losers by the alteration of the coin; and to such other uses as commissioners appointed by her Majesty shall think fit." Of this sum, not more than £100,000 was paid in specie and sent to Scotland. £243,166 was applied to the payment of the stock and interest of the African Company. See Somerville's *Reign of Queen Anne*, pp. 222, 601.—Ed.

Mr. Walker and of other wealthy farmers we visited in the course of our journey, differing widely from those of persons in the same station in the south of Scotland. Breakfast was on the table at eight o'clock, dinner at one, supper at seven, and we were always dismissed to our bedrooms with the light of day. The critical state of the country, as might naturally be expected, was the most frequent and interesting subject of conversation in every company at this time. The causes commonly assigned for apprehending danger, exhibited a striking specimen of the ignorance and bigotry, not only of the illiterate, but of many loyal and well-disposed persons of education and rank. The characteristic appellations of *Democrats* and *Unitarians* were as much confounded as if they had implied an inseparable association of ideas and principles. "These Democrats and Unitarians are at the bottom of all the mischief—they will never rest till they have overturned the church and the monarchy," were the cant phrases in the mouths of all the professed friends of the constitution.

We fixed our lodgings at Buxton, in the well-known Inn of the Hall. A considerable propor-

tion of our fellow-lodgers were from Ireland. As the question relative to the privileges of the Irish Catholics had lately become so interesting, I was happy in the opportunity of learning the opinion of the gentlemen from that country who seemed to be the most sensible and best informed. Of this number was Mr. Ogle, one of the representatives from Dublin in the Parliament of Ireland, and whose name I had often seen mentioned among the distinguished speakers. I was, however, much disappointed with the sentiments he expressed, not only as his own, but those of the generality of the Irish members, in disapproval of the immunities lately granted to the Roman Catholics in Ireland. Instead of conciliating the affections of that numerous sect to the English government, he affirmed with confidence that the indulgences already granted could only tend to stimulate their zeal, and increase their impetuosity in urging more enlarged demands, and that they never would be at rest till they effected the separation and independence of Ireland—a prediction that, alas, has been too much verified by later events.

While at Buxton, I had great pleasure in the

society of Sir John and Lady Clerk.* At their lodgings I was introduced to the company of Miss Seward,† a lady of literary celebrity, Mr. Seward, author of the "Anecdotes," etc., Sir Adam Ferguson, Sir Archibald Grant,‡ and Baron Gordon.§ Miss Seward spoke a good deal to the persons near her, but no literary subject was introduced, nor had I any opportunity of taking part in the conversation, or breaking that silence which she imputes to me, in a letter in which she characterizes all the individuals who met at a tea-drinking party one afternoon in Sir John Clerk's.‖ She was at that time growing corpulent, but her features indicated former comeliness.

The condition of the common people and labourers in the vicinity of Buxton appeared mean and wretched beyond anything I had ever seen in my own country. Many of them lodge,

* Of Penicuik. † Anna Seward, born 1747, died 1809.—Ed.

‡ Of Monymusk, Aberdeenshire. He died in 1796.—Ed.

§ Cosmo Gordon, Esq., a Baron of Exchequer in Scotland. He was in Parliament from 1774 to 1777.—Ed.

‖ "Yesterday, in Lady Clerk's apartment, I found myself amidst a constellation of Scottish talents: Sir Adam Fergusson . . . . Baron Gordon . . . . Mr. Stuart Monteith . . . . the shy Mr. Somerville, who seldom speaks but on paper, and there, I am told, he speaks well; Sir John Clerk," etc.—*Letters of Anna Seward*, vol. iii. p. 261.—Ed.

or rather burrow, in caves, dug out of the accumulated masses of lime and rubbish cast out from the mines and quarries abounding in that part of the country. After clearing a subterraneous apartment sufficient for the accommodation of their families, they open two crevices on the outer side of the hillock, one for giving vent to the smoke, and another for letting in the light. I found a husband, wife, and eight children, huddled together in one of these deplorable habitations. Their allurement, as I understood, was the getting the possession of them without being subjected to the burden of rent. The forfeiture of this privilege they dreaded as a serious calamity, then threatened by the Duke of Devonshire's steward, who insisted on their paying a small sum annually in acknowledgment of the right of the lord of the manor, to prevent the prescription of the property of the caves, created by the toilsome labour of their wretched inhabitants. The wages of labour were, at that time, smaller than in Scotland, and inadequate to the purchase of the necessary provisions for the sustenance of their families. I attended the funeral of a person of this description from Buxton to Fairfield, the place of interment,

where the parish church is situated. After the ceremony of the burial service was performed, with indecent hurry by an intoxicated curate in a dirty surplice, the family and near relations of the deceased, who stood around the coffin, fell down on their knees, and began to beat their breasts, sobbing and shrieking aloud. I was informed that this custom, which I had imagined to be peculiar to Ireland, was considered by all the families of lower rank as an indispensable mark of respect to the memory of their departed friends.

On our return from Buxton, Mrs. Robson and I visited the Peak of Derby, one of the most curious natural phenomena that any country exhibits. It has been so often described, that nothing new or interesting remains for my observation. We pursued our journey homeward by Doncaster, Selby, York, etc. We spent a few days with Mr. Barton, an opulent wool-dealer and friend of Mr. Robson's, at Carlton, which presented an aspect of country quite different from any I ever visited before, and disagreeable, even disgusting, at the time when I saw it. The country for many miles around is flat, sandy, and intersected by a great number of small canals; and the

weather being hot and rainy, it was almost impossible to walk in the narrow footpaths without treading on frogs, swarming and croaking through every hour of the day. The canals, called peat canals, are narrow, like the ditches in the Meadow* at Edinburgh, and were filled with stagnated, putrid water, extremely offensive to the sight and smell. At York where we lodged a night the inn was so crowded with Quakers, assembled at their annual convention, that after supper we were transferred from thence to private lodgings for beds. We incurred more serious inconvenience at Newcastle, from an assemblage of a multitude of persons of a very different character from those who had interfered with our accommodation at York. It happened to be the race week, and every inn was crowded with gentlemen and jockeys, attracted from the counties near and distant, by the interest and pleasure of the turf. My bedchamber at the inn, kept by Mr. Hall, was in an upper storey, the fourth and highest in the house. Had I not been kept awake by the noise of riotous companies, the dread of fire would have prevented the possibility of sleep, for when

* The Meadow at Edinburgh was not then drained.

going to my bed-chamber I had observed candles left burning at the doors of many of the rooms, without any person to look after them.

While I was at Buxton, Dr. Robertson died. He had enjoyed a chaplaincy of £80 per annum, and a pension of £200. Mr. Dundas, a true friend to the Church of Scotland, well pleased with the loyalty of its members, and their patriotic exertions at that crisis, suggested to Mr. Pitt the propriety of appointing four additional chaplaincies, and applying Dr. Robertson's pension for the payment of their salaries, affording to each £50 per annum. A coalition between the old Whig party, headed by the Duke of Portland, and Mr. Pitt's administration having taken place, I had early assurances from Sir Gilbert Elliot that my interest would not be neglected; and soon after my return to Scotland I received a letter from Mr. Dundas intimating my appointment to one of the new chaplaincies.

The circle of my acquaintance being enlarged by the favourable reception of my publications, I cherished sanguine hopes of being enabled to render the work now on my hands more valuable and interesting, by the acquisition of original

papers, which preceding authors in the same track with myself had not enjoyed the opportunity of inspecting. Sir Gilbert Elliot had warmly solicited the Duke of Portland for permission to inspect his family manuscripts. On account of the distinguished favour and confidence manifested by King William to His Grace's grandfather, they were supposed to contain a store of authentic information not yet discovered. The Duke's answer to Sir Gilbert, after I had long been kept in suspense and anxiety, was in the end unfavourable. Other applications were more successful.

To the Duchess of Buccleuch* I was indebted for the use of many volumes of original manuscripts collected by the Duke of Shrewsbury, containing several state papers and some hundred letters, mostly political, and written by persons who were conspicuous actors in public life during the reigns of Charles II., James II., King William, and Queen Anne. The value of these papers I had learned from Dr. Robertson, who advised me to use my best endeavours to obtain access to them.

* Elizabeth, wife of Henry, third Duke of Buccleuch, and daughter of George, Duke of Montagu. She died in the year 1827, aged eighty-five.—Ed.

The Earl of Hardwicke transmitted to me copies of letters from the Earl of Godolphin, Mr. Harley, Lord Halifax, and the Duke of Marlborough, which made a part of the collection of the late Earl of Hardwicke. The Townshend, Orford, and Walpole Papers were of great use to me. The first named of these collections contains almost the whole correspondence between the British Cabinet and the Plenipotentiaries, relative to the negociations at the Hague, 1709, and at Gertruedenberg, 1710, and to the scheme of the barrier treaty, with some important correspondence between Mr. St. John, Lord Townshend, Mr. Boyle, and Lord Dartmouth. The Orford and Walpole Papers, for which I was entirely indebted to the kindness of Mr. Coxe, consist of extracts from the journals of the residents at foreign courts, with several of their letters. Mr. Coxe also favoured me with copies of a few letters from the Earl of Peterborough, written from Vienna and Venice, in 1711. I owed great obligations to the late Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, for access to the valuable manuscripts composed by his grandfather, who was an influential member of the Scottish Parliament at the time of the

Union, and much in the confidence of the Duke of Queensberry, his Majesty's Commissioner. Mr. Chalmers* of the Board of Trade, punctually transmitted to me copies of all the state papers I wished to consult. Our literary good offices were reciprocal.

Dr. Robertson, as I have mentioned above, had recommended to me to make application to the Duchess of Buccleuch for the Shrewsbury papers. They had been put into his hands several years before by the Duke of Montagu, the Duchess' father, who expressed a wish that the Doctor would continue the History of England from the Revolution to the accession of the family of Hanover. Though Dr. Robertson declined complying with this desire, he had inspected the papers, and marked in his common-place book such of them as he considered useful for throwing light on the most important transactions during the reigns of King William and Queen Anne. At the last interview I had with that illustrious person, January 1793, he inquired with friendly anxiety concerning the progress of my work, conversing frankly on some of the most interesting

* George Chalmers, author of *Caledonia*; born 1742, died 1825.—Ed.

subjects which were to enter into it. He said that though I had not then obtained the Shrewsbury papers, yet, as I might not have the opportunity of seeing him again, he would not delay presenting me with the notes he had made upon them, to be retained merely as a testimony of his esteem and good wishes, being of no value farther than by pointing out such of the letters or papers as seemed to be particularly deserving of the attention of an historical inquirer. He opened his desk, and cut out from his common-place book the sheets containing the notes, and delivered them into my hands. I felt assured that they were the latest pledge of his regard, for the wan complexion and wasted frame of this excellent man precluded the hope of my ever seeing him again.

Dr. Robertson's notes, as he had told me, were of no use in the work in which I was now engaged, because the letters he examined in the Shrewsbury collection referred chiefly to the preceding reign. I inspected attentively every paper of that collection, and have transcribed such as appeared more important, either on account of the celebrity of the authors, or the information con-

tained in them. Some of them throw light upon political transactions during the reign of King William, and confirm many of my conjectural observations. I have made an arrangement of all the documents of this description for publication, on the chance of my history being reprinted. I also made out a catalogue, and composed a brief analysis of all the letters, etc., with a few critical observations, which may perhaps assist and shorten the labour of some future historian, who may happen to retrace the ground on which I have gone before him. The composition of this work cost me no small labour, and extended to a quarto volume, which I got bound in a form matching the other volumes, and presented it to the Duchess of Buccleuch, as a testimony of my gratitude to Her Grace for favouring me with a perusal of this valuable collection.*

The Rev. Mr. Coxe, in transmitting to me such of the Orford and Townshend papers as he thought

* Mr. Coxe has published a selection of these papers, several of them being those recommended in the catalogue I sent to the Duchess of Buccleuch; and I think there can be little doubt of my catalogue, making the eleventh volume, having been put into his hands with the rest of the volumes. This publication has been a cruel disappointment to me, aggravated by its coming from a friend to whom I owe signal obligations.

likely to convey valuable information relative to public events during the reign of Queen Anne and King William, at the same time accompanied them with restrictive recommendations, which narrowed their usefulness. He insinuated that it would be gratifying to the proprietors if I found myself warranted, by the evidence contained in them, to justify the Whig ministry for rejecting the terms of the peace proposed by Louis XIV. in 1707-9. A very different conviction was the result of the perusal of these papers; and I composed a note to be inserted in the History, transcribing particular passages from the Townshend papers in support of the opinion I have stated in the text, and in impeachment of the sincerity of the Whig junto, who resorted to every pretext and subterfuge to entangle the negotiations and avert the conclusion of a peace, which would have been a deathblow to their influence and authority. But, as Mr. Coxe, to whom I made known my sentiments, thought that it would be indelicate and offensive to the family to criminate their ancestors upon evidence furnished by themselves, I found myself under a moral obligation to withdraw the note which, though not essential to

sustain the facts I had stated, must have contributed to fortify and confirm them.

I had access to all the public repositories, to other private collections of manuscripts, and to the ephemeral publications which had any reference to the reign of Queen Anne.* I have acknowledged the individuals to whom I owed these favours in my introduction to the History.

Having reached the number of pages to which booksellers wish to confine a quarto volume, I intimated to Messrs. Strahan and Cadell my readiness to treat with them for my second volume. They appointed me to meet them at Mr. Spottiswood's, where they intended to be upon a visit in the month of August 1795. At our first interview they made me the offer of £300 for the copyright, which was so much beneath my expectation that I abruptly declined any farther conversation on the business. At the sametime

* I found, in the Mellerstain Library, a large collection of the pamphlets and periodical papers published during the reigns of William, Anne, and George I. Mr. Baillie's ancestors, particularly the great-grandfather of the present Mr. Baillie, had been actively engaged in the political transactions of their own times, and were employed and consulted by the Whig ministers. To the late worthy Sir William Forbes [of Pitsligo, the eminent banker, and author of the Life of Dr. Beattie] I owed great obligations, both for the loan of valuable books and for his useful criticisms.

I had a flattering testimony of their esteem. They informed me they had long wished to find some person qualified to continue the History of Britain from the Revolution down to the present time. I understood them to mean that the work should be more elaborate and correct than Smollett's History. They assured me that before they left London they had determined to make the first offer of this undertaking to me, believing it would redound to my honour and profit. They proposed the work to be published in octavo volumes, giving a premium of £300 for every volume, and perhaps a larger sum if the work should happen to meet with a favourable reception.* This undertaking I declined without a moment's hesitation, because it was incompatible with my professional duties; and indeed, had I been otherwise disengaged, it would have been attended with such a load of anxiety and such immensity of toil as must have

* In a letter dated "London, 13th October 1795," Mr. Strahan, on behalf of Mr. Cadell and himself, proposes to Dr. Somerville "to write the History of England during the reign of George the Third, which, with Hume's and Smollett's, would make a complete History of England to the present time. The work to consist of three or four volumes in octavo." This proposal, like that which had been made verbally at Spottiswood—if the two are not identical—appears to have been declined.—Ed.

defeated all the advantages arising from the proposed reward.

In the end, Messrs. Strahan and Cadell undertook to be the publishers of my new History on terms which proved less advantageous than those they had originally offered. The alarming state of public affairs had in the meantime depreciated all literary property.

The opinion of the most judicious critics who read my History of Queen Anne was, that it did not detract from my literary reputation. When application was made to the King by the Duke of Portland for permission to dedicate the work to him, his Majesty said that he was well pleased that so interesting a part of the British history had fallen into the hands of an author so able to do justice to the subject. The reviewers were, in general, favourable; but none of them expressed that decided approval which they bestowed on the former volume.

CHAPTER VIII.

1796-1800.

IN order to give a connected view of my historical engagements, I have postponed the introduction of domestic events of a prior date, which I now proceed to mention.

In April 1796 my family received the mournful intelligence of the death of Mr. Charters,* my wife's brother, at Calcutta, who had lately been appointed to an office of high respectability and great emolument. This event was followed soon after by the death of her father, 6th May 1796, at the advanced age of eighty-three. Mr. Charters was beloved by his children, and enjoyed the esteem of a large circle of acquaintance. A native modesty and precarious health occasioned his withdrawing pre-

* Samuel Charters, Esq., Judge at Patna.

maturely from the discharge of public duties. In the end of April 1796 I also lost my kind friend James, Lord Somerville. His education had been injudiciously conducted, which was the source of certain prejudices that exhibited an unpopular aspect of his character to persons who were slightly acquainted with him. He indulged an unreasonable antipathy against his native country, was reserved and unsocial in private life, and abstained altogether from taking any part in public business. The natural shyness and sensitiveness of his temper had been aggravated by disappointments he met with in the army during his long service in the German campaigns. But these minor infirmities were overbalanced by sterling virtues—a high sense of honour, an abhorrence of mean conduct, and a warm attachment to the friends he valued, in which number I had the happiness to be included.

In the beginning of 1795, my eldest son,* who, having studied for the medical profession, had lately taken his degree in Edinburgh, was appointed Garrison Surgeon at the Cape of Good

* William Somerville, Esq., M.D., born in Edinburgh 22d April 1771, died at Florence 20th June 1860.—Ed.

Hope, and soon after Private Secretary to General Craig, and Inspector of all his Majesty's buildings, woods, etc., not military. The object of the last of these offices was, to prevent that barbarous treatment of the native savages that had never been restrained by the preceding government of the Dutch, and to obtain a more intimate knowledge of the more distant parts of the country and of their inhabitants, as the basis of future plans for the extension of civilization, as well as the enlargement of the commerce of the British empire. Along with a companion, my son, in prosecution of these objects, visited the country of the Hottentots and the Caffres, and Orange River, including territories previously unexplored by Europeans.* The success with which he acquitted himself in the discharge of the arduous and dangerous† duties annexed to his office, fully justified, I have reason to believe, the selection of so young a man for so important a service.

The aspect of public affairs during the latter

* See Sir John Barrow's *Account of Travels into the interior of Southern Africa in the years* 1797 *and* 1798.—Ed.

† My son and his fellow-traveller were sentenced to death by the Caffre chief, and afterwards fortunately released by the interposition of one of his female relations who happened to visit them.

years of the eighteenth century became so dark and portentous, as to encroach sensibly on the personal happiness of every individual who had the interest of his country at heart. The successive desertion of all our allies, the rapid progress of the French armies on the Continent, and the increasing number of our declared enemies, together with domestic discontent and that daring spirit of innovation which threatened the subversion of all our establishments, presented the most alarming crisis that ever has occurred since Britain had a name among the nations. The party in opposition in both Houses of Parliament fomented the turbulent spirit of the times, and indirectly encouraged the ambitious projects of our enemies. The mutiny of the navy,* the principal nerve of our defence, constituted the climax of public danger.

Amidst these heavy clouds which overspread the political horizon, some rays of light occasionally cheered the drooping spirits of the faithful and steady patriot. The superiority of the naval strength of Britain was ascertained by a

* The mutiny of the fleet at Portsmouth in April 1797, and that at the Nore, which took place in the ensuing month.—Ed.

series of splendid victories at sea. Though the first of these over the French fleet by the fleet under the command of Lord Howe, 1st June 1794, had set our minds at rest for a short time with respect to the danger of invasion, yet the wavering policy of the Dutch, which terminated in the subversion of their independence and the transfer of all their resources to the domination of France, brought such an immense reinforcement to the French fleet, as threatened to overpower the strongest force Great Britain could have opposed to it. The vigilance and stratagem by which Admiral Duncan prevented the sailing of the Dutch fleet from Ushant, till he had obtained a sufficient reinforcement for engaging it with any chance of success, and the illustrious victory he achieved at Camperdown, after it had escaped from port in October 1797, were undoubtedly among the most seasonable and important events which occurred in the course of the war, and gave a decided superiority to the naval power of England.

This last victory (Camperdown) was especially pleasing to my family, on account of the honour acquired by my brother-in-law Captain Fairfax,

Admiral Duncan's captain. The admiral acknowledged that he had been much indebted to his advice; and, in testimony of his gratitude, entrusted him with the despatches to Government. The services of the admiral were immediately rewarded with a peerage, and a pension of £3000 per annum for his own life and that of his son. Our friend was no otherwise distinguished than by the empty honour of a knight banneret, and the promise of future pecuniary recompense, which never was performed.*

* The following account of him is from an Edinburgh newspaper of 1813:—"Sir William George Fairfax, Knight Banneret, Vice-Admiral of the Red, one of the oldest officers in the navy, died at Edinburgh, 7th November, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. Sir William went to sea in the year 1751, and served very constantly in every war from that time to the peace of Amiens, having borne his Majesty's commission upwards of sixty years. He commanded the 'Venerable' in the memorable battle of Camperdown, on the 11th October 1797, and was the bearer of Lord Duncan's despatches with the account of the victory gained over the Dutch fleet, which bore ample testimony to the merit of his captain. Upon this event he was honoured with knighthood, and soon after was appointed Colonel of Marines—a commission which he enjoyed only a short time, having been quickly promoted to the rank of admiral. No feature in his public character was more eminent than a strong sense of duty. Above courting popularity, his kind attentions to the comforts of those who were placed under him, and his active zeal in advancing their interests, rendered him beloved and respected in the honourable service to which he belonged. In private life, the generosity of his sentiments, the goodness of his heart, and the affability of his manners, en-

After finishing the History of Queen Anne, I hesitated about the plan of my future occupation. Lord Hardwicke, whose kindness entitled his advice to the highest respect, recommended my continuing, in chronological order, the history of the succeeding reigns. I should probably have complied with his lordship's advice, if the most interesting events and political transactions which must necessarily have entered into the work proposed had not been forestalled by Mr. Coxe in the Lives of Sir Robert Walpole and his brother, Lord Walpole, the former already published, and the latter ready for the press.

In 1798 I received from the Duke of Portland, by the interest of Lord Minto, the offer of the Professorship of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, vacant by the death of Dr. Hardie.* At an earlier period of my life, no office

deared Sir William Fairfax to every one who enjoyed his society. Deeply regretted, he died with the same pious resignation which distinguished him in all the trials of his life, in the full possession of his faculties, and at a mature age, leaving a name that will long be held in remembrance." [In consideration of the admiral's distinguished naval services, a baronetcy was, some years after his death, conferred on his son, the late Sir Henry Fairfax.—Ed.]

* Thomas Hardie, D.D., previously minister of Ballingray, and then of the High Church, Edinburgh. According to Mr. Bower (*Hist. Univ.*

could have more accorded with my taste. But, since my entrance on the ministerial office, I had not cultivated this branch of knowledge, and from a consciousness of my unfitness for its duties, I found myself under the necessity of declining an appointment which my patrons did me the honour to think peculiarly suited to my talents.

In the year 1800 his Majesty was pleased to grant me a pension of £100 per annum; and the arrangements connected with this business were the occasion of my making another visit to London.

The few months I spent there were in some respects agreeable enough. The Duke of Portland, when I waited upon him, referred in kind terms to my Histories. I was glad to have it in my power, at his own request, to oblige his Grace with the perusal of some original letters I had extracted from the Shrewsbury papers, relative to the secret conferences between his grandfather and Marshal Beufflers during the negociations previous to the peace of Ryswick.

of Edin., vol. iii., p. 224), from the resignation of Dr. P. Cuming (see *supra*, p. 18) in 1762, till Dr. Hardie's appointment in 1788, the Church History Chair had been considered a sinecure, no attempt having been made to deliver a course of lectures, while under Dr. Hardie the class became one of the best attended in the University.—Ed.

These letters happily confirmed my conjectures, that the secret conferences related chiefly to the treatment of King James and his family after the establishment of peace. The Duke, unsolicited, made the offer of presenting me to the king. He recommended to me to take the advice of the Duke of Roxburghe about the dress in which I ought to appear at Court, saying there was not any person more correct in such matters. In compliance with his advice, I waited on the Duke of Roxburghe, and equipped on the critical day according to his instructions, with a gown borrowed from a Presbyterian clergyman, and a wig in the fashion of what was worn by dignitaries in the Church of England, I was carried by the Duke of Portland, in his vis-a-vis, to St. James', where we arrived, after many stops from the crowds assembled in the streets. It happened to be the first levee day after the shocking attempt made on the king's life by Hatfield* at Drury Lane, and the multitude of persons of distinction, and of every party, who came to offer their congratulations to his Majesty upon that event, was beyond what had been remembered, and left no time for new introductions.

* 11th May 1800.

I was amply compensated for my disappointment by witnessing the congratulatory addresses of both Houses of Parliament, and of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, presented to his Majesty on the throne, and hearing his answer, delivered with great dignity and with sensible emotion, when he referred to the danger which he had escaped. Sir James Burges had taken care to get me placed as near as possible to the throne, where I remained stationed above an hour before his Majesty was seated.

The next levee day I was presented to the king by the Duke of Portland. The three questions with which I had the honour of being addressed by his Majesty, and for which I had been prepared before, were :—"When did you come to town?" "Have you come to publish?" "What subject are you now upon?"

Passing to the throne-room, Mr. Dundas had the goodness to introduce me to Mr. Pitt, observing as he named me, how much I was obliged to Mr. Pitt for having introduced my name and defended my authority as an historian in the House of Commons. During the debates relative to the Union with Ireland, Mr. Pitt, in answer to several

of the speeches by the members in opposition representing the discontents, not only among the common people, but persons of the highest consideration in the landed interest, as foreboding the fatal effects of the treaty, had referred to a passage in my History of Queen Anne,* to shew the change of sentiment that, in similar circumstances, had taken place in the Scottish nation after a few years' experience of the happy fruits which resulted from their Union with England.

I continued in conversation with Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas for a few minutes, and in reply to a question as to the state of the poor, and the measures adopted to mitigate their sufferings in my part of the country during the then extraordinary scarcity, I had the opportunity of mentioning to Mr. Pitt another remarkable proof of the advantages of the Union to Scotland. The facts are worth repeating here. There had been a series of unfavourable seasons, and deficient harvests at the end of the seventeenth, as there were at the end of the eighteenth century, but while in the latter case successful efforts had been made in all parts of the country to secure ample

* Somerville's *Queen Anne*, p. 228.—Ed.

provision for the emergency, what had been the result in the former case? Sir William Menzies, who farmed the Excise in Scotland at that period, had fallen into large arrears (£60,000) to the Government, and if I recollect rightly was prosecuted for payment by order of the Privy Council. In his exoneration, he pleaded that famine, arising from natural causes or the hand of God, superseded all contracts; and, in support of his plea, he undertook to prove that from 1697 to 1705 the crops were inadequate to the maintenance of the population, that several thousands of the poor had actually perished of starvation, that as many had emigrated, and that multitudes were compelled to have recourse to unnatural food, as wild spinage, snails, etc. In truth, at that period the situation of Scotland was deplorable. The distress arising from the scarcity did not, from the circumstances of the country, admit of prompt and effectual mitigation. There was little or no winter navigation to Scotland. The difficult state of the roads prevented, in many cases, intercourse between different districts; and those which were remote, and where the soil was naturally barren or uncultivated, could not obtain even the scanty aid which

might have been occasionally afforded by their charitable neighbours, and were immediately doomed to starvation. The want of money in the country further put it out of the power of persons of better condition to import a supply of grain in any considerable quantity from the Continent.

To have done with my court presentations. The Duke of Roxburghe did me the honour to call for me a few days after I had been presented to the King; and as it is customary after that ceremony to attend the levee of the Queen, he offered to introduce me to Her Majesty; but I declined this proffered favour, informing His Grace that I intended to delay my revisiting the court till Lord Somerville's* return from Portugal. This did not happen till a few weeks after, when his Lordship conferred the honour of introducing me to Her Majesty with flattering circumstances of attention.

Among the civilities which I received at this time from persons of distinction, I shall only mention such as refer to my literary character. Lord Hardwicke, with whom I had repeated interviews, recommended my carrying down my historical

* John, fifteenth Lord Somerville, born 1765, died 1819.

labours to the successive reigns of the Hanoverian Princes, and expressed his readiness to afford me all the materials of information in his possession. The kindness of Lord Macartney,* and the confidence he reposed in me, were so uncommon, that I have often reflected upon my acquaintance with him as one of the most pleasing events of my life. Before my arrival in London at this time, I had received a letter from his Lordship, thanking me for a present of my History of Queen Anne, with approving notice of my former work. He called upon me within a few days after my arrival in London, and in the course of a long conversation, chiefly on literary subjects, recommended the history of the present reign as the most useful and profitable field of my future labour. To encourage me in this undertaking, he offered to present me with a copy of Lord Bute's private correspondence during the period of his administration; and having himself been long in the confidence of the court, and much employed in the diplomatic department, he added that he would readily impart such

* Born 1737, died 1806; Envoy Extraordinary to Russia in 1764, Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1769, and, besides many other public employments, Ambassador to Pekin in 1792. In 1768 he married Lady Jane Stuart, second daughter of the Earl of Bute.—Ed.

anecdotes and information relative to the state of public affairs as he had access to know, and which were likely to contribute to the interest and value of the work proposed. His Lordship desired me to call upon him for this purpose as often as I found convenient, at an early hour, and he was pleased to say that he would always be at home to me. As a pledge of his sincerity, his Lordship immediately put into my hands Lord Bute's letters, together with a few manuscripts of his own composition, and several letters from foreign ambassadors, curious and instructive, with respect to political transactions at home and abroad. I returned Lord Bute's letters after I had perused them, and mentioned to his Lordship that as the subjects they contained were of a delicate nature, I did not think myself at liberty to transcribe any part of the letters, and wished his Lordship to understand that I felt myself unqualified to undertake such an important work as the history of the present reign. But, whether it was to induce me to change my resolution, or to confer a mark of his regard, his Lordship said that he would employ his secretary to make out a copy of Lord Bute's correspondence, to be sent to Jedburgh. His

Lordship hinted his desire that the manuscript to be sent might not be shewn or published till a distant day; by which I understood that he did not wish me to publish it during his life. Happy to avail myself of his Lordship's offer of favouring me with colloquial information, I frequently visited him for that purpose, and, after retiring to my lodgings, committed to writing the anecdotes he communicated, many of them relating to eminent characters then on the stage, and to recent political transactions.

One of these, of a more interesting nature, I shall mention in this place. Lord North, alarmed by the tumultuary spirit of Ireland during the latter years of the American war, had requested Lord Macartney's opinion with respect to the most expedient and effectual measures for preventing the desperate outrages which were then threatened, and for promoting a permanent good understanding between the kindred nations. Lord Macartney suggested to his Lordship that as he had made the state of Ireland from his earliest days the principal object of his attention, and from local residence, as well as official trust, had the best opportunity of understanding the temper and interests of the

people, he had been long convinced that a union with England was the only certain measure of accomplishing, though by a slow process, a cordial amity between the people in both kingdoms, and of establishing the solid and lasting prosperity of the British empire. "But," said Lord North, "is such an event possible?" Lord Macartney answered that he did not entertain the smallest doubt of its being practicable, but that it behoved the ministry to lay their account with encountering many difficulties, and a clamorous opposition, although by prudent address and unrelaxed firmness all obstacles might at no great distance of time be surmounted. Lord North shrugged his shoulders, and changed the subject of conversation, which Lord Macartney observed was as much as to say, "*Let us have peace in our own times.*" To this anecdote of that irresolution and timidity, which were the prominent features of Lord North's character, and the bane of his administration, Lord Macartney added that an Union with Ireland could at that time have been accomplished with less opposition and difficulty than had been surmounted by Mr. Pitt, whose character formed a perfect contrast to that of Lord North.

In consequence of a letter of introduction by Lord Buchan to the Reverend Dr. Gregory,* who had attained considerable celebrity for several miscellaneous publications, I had the opportunity of repeated interviews with him, and acquired a great store of information with respect to the present state of literature. I found him strongly prejudiced in favour of the French Revolution, notwithstanding the flagitious crimes and unparalleled calamities of which it was daily productive. From the tenor of his conversation, I suspected that he co-operated in the New Annual Register. He seemed to doubt the correctness of my information when I assured him that Mr. Moore, lately convicted of sedition at Edinburgh, had been carried from the jail there at mid-day in the sight of a multitude of peaceable spectators, and not, as untruly represented in the New Annual Register, at the dead hour of night, from the fear of his being rescued by the mob. Dr. Gregory informed me that he was collecting materials for carrying on the Biographia Britannica, and had

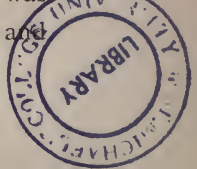
* George Gregory, D.D., born 1754, died 1808, the author of various works in miscellaneous literature, and for some years the editor of the New Annual Register.—Ed.

obtained all the documents and sketches in possession of the late Dr. Kippis when he died; and he pressingly invited me to become a partner in that work, at the highest scale of profit, in a proportion to my contribution of labour. The lives of distinguished Scotchmen was the department he proposed to assign to me, the selection to be left to my own discretion. It was impossible for me, however, to comply with his request.

For several years before my last journey to London I had been engaged in correspondence with Mr. Chalmers, Secretary to the Board of Trade. He had embraced the opportunity of a former correspondence to communicate to me the plan of his History of Britain, of which the first volume has been lately published, under the title of *Caledonia,* requesting my assistance to furnish him with a description of the mountains, rivers, castles, roads, and antiquities in the county of Roxburgh, and the etymologies of their names, according to my own opinion, and the conjectures of antiquaries. I performed my allotted duty not without a good deal of trouble, but was in some measure compensated by Mr. Chalmers' attentive fulfilment of the conditions on which he had

solicited my assistance, namely, his sending me from the Paper Office copies of all the original documents I found necessary to consult in the composition of the History of Queen Anne. The kind assurances I had from Mr. Chalmers of the pleasure with which he entertained the prospect of seeing me in London, excited reciprocal expectations on my part. I had many interviews with him at his office in Whitehall, and was entertained with a ceremonious dinner at his house; but such a dogmatism and confidence of superiority pervaded his conversation that I retired without any increase of esteem for a person on whose correspondence I had put so high a value.

Mr. Coxe, who had been for a long time one of my correspondents, disappointed my conjectures about his person and manners in a different way. Instead of the advanced age, the gravity and formality I had anticipated, from the immense bulk of his publications, and the antiquated type and obscurity of his hand-writing, I beheld in him a person little beyond the meridian of life, dressed like a modish young divine. His manners and conversation were frank and open. He was anxious to shew me every mark of attention and



civility, and introduced me to the acquaintance of several of his learned friends. In the number of these was Mr. Adolphus, who now ranks high as a barrister. He was then occupied in writing the history of the present reign, perhaps it was at that time published;* and it gave me sincere pleasure to find, as far as I could judge from the short conversation I had with him on passing events and public affairs, that his views were liberal, and untainted with party spirit.

The company to whom I was introduced at Lord Macartney's dinners were all persons of high rank and station in literature—Major Rennell,† author of the map of Hindostan; Mr. Huskisson, at that time secretary to Mr. Dundas, and since celebrated for his superior financial knowledge; Colonel Wellesley, now Commander of our army in Portugal, introduced to me as an acquaintance of my son at the Cape of Good Hope;‡ Lord

* The *History of England from the Accession of George III. till the Peace of* 1780, by John Adolphus, Esq., barrister-at-law, was first published in 3 vols. in 1802-1805.—Ed.

† Born 1782, died 1830. Major Rennell's greatest work, *The Geographical System of Herodotus*, was published in London in this year (1800). —Ed.

‡ There is some mistake here, at all events with regard to the date of Dr. Somerville's introduction to Colonel Wellesley. The future com-

Ormonde,* and others whose names I have forgot. No reference to any of the political questions of the day was introduced at Lord Macartney's table on these occasions. The conversation was purely attic, and not less instructive than amusing. The same remark may be applied to the company I met with at Lord Hardwicke's, after the ladies left the table, in the number of whom was Lady Margaret Fordyce, now the wife of my friend Sir James Burges, whose beauty was fresh and blooming, though she was then approaching to her fiftieth year.

No visit I made in London at this time afforded me greater pleasure than one at Wimbledon, in consequence of an invitation from Mr. Dundas.† I remained there from Saturday till Monday. His affability in the evenings after the dinner guests departed, was fascinating beyond

mander in Portugal was in India in the year 1800. In 1797 he had joined the 33d at the Cape, where he may have become known to the author's son (see *ante*, page 295), and accompanied the regiment to India; he did not return to England till the year 1805.—Ed.

* Walter, eighteenth Earl and first Marquis of Ormonde, born 1770, died 1820.—Ed.

† He was, in 1800, Secretary of State for the War Department, and President of the Board of Control. Till the 1st of May of that year, he had also held the office of Treasurer of the Navy.

description. He spoke of youthful adventures and of his early friends with unaffected warmth; and on the political events of the times, his conversation was frank and interesting, without any of that mystery and reserve which is often affected by minor politicians. Mr. Dundas' character in this respect reminded me of that which Mr. Pope has drawn of Sir Robert Walpole:—

> "Seen him I have; but in his *happiest hour*
> Of *social pleasure*, ill exchanged for power!
> Seen him, uncumbered by the venial tribe,
> *Smile* without *art*, and *win* without a *bribe*."
>
> DUNCIAD, Book ii.

Only the first part of the character, however, applies; for Mr. Dundas' elevation and prosperity never made him forgetful of his early friends and acquaintances; on the contrary, there never, perhaps, was an example of any statesman who availed himself of his power more invariably and assiduously for the purpose of serving his friends. But it would be doing injustice to Mr. Dundas' character to circumscribe his benevolence within the narrow precincts of private friendship. He was incessantly and disinterestedly active in meliorating the condition of all orders of men to the utmost extent of the influence which he derived from his official

station, and his personal interest with those who stood higher than himself in the scale of patronage. In the various departments entrusted to him, he left permanent monuments of his wise and beneficent exertions. The measures adopted by the legislature and the Court of Directors in consequence of Mr. Dundas' recommendation, with respect to the management of our East India colonies, demonstrate intense application to the investigation of facts, and great foresight in providing for the extension of territory and change of local circumstances in that difficult department. His regulations with respect to the navy have been productive of the most salutary consequences to the private sailors while retained on duty, and to their relations at home. The augmentation of the salaries of the judges and officers of the Court of Session, of the stipends of the clergy, and of all the servants of the public in Scotland, are chiefly to be ascribed to his influence and advice. Of his private kindnesses, I have known instances of a nature to exclude all suspicion of their arising from motives of ostentation or selfish policy. There was no gall in his temper. He did not seem to feel the injuries done him by

factious opponents, or the ungrateful returns of those on whom he had conferred favours. The trust and influence which sprung from his patronage were perhaps occasionally perverted to the gratification of the cupidity and ambition of the individuals who enjoyed them, but money was never the object of his pursuit, nor was he capable of mean and nefarious expedients to advance his personal fortune. My sentiments with respect to Mr. Dundas' character are not in the smallest degree affected by the kind intentions he expressed for me in the instances I have mentioned in the latter part of these memoirs. I felt the same esteem and the same attachment to him at the time he thwarted my views of promotion; and I have often regretted that I never had the opportunity of making known to him how sincerely I rejoiced in his prosperity, and the indignation I felt on account of the virulent persecution which interrupted his career of usefulness to his friends and to the public, and clouded the evening of his illustrious life. Quickness of intellect, readiness and fluency of elocution, and unshaken fortitude in the prosecution of the measures which he advised, or in which he con-

curred, were the talents that procured for Mr. Dundas a political pre-eminence and sway beyond the most sanguine expectation of his friends, and such as never had been before attained by any individual in North Britain of the most distinguished rank and family interest. Mr. Dundas' taste was not refined, nor his style correct, nor did he excel in closeness or choice of arguments. His incessant employment at the bar from his professional outset was incompatible with literary or scientific industry; but a native force of mind, a penetrating discernment of character, a prompt comprehension of the information communicated to him, a capacity for improving and applying it to existing circumstances, and a fortitude undismayed by difficulties and disasters, supplied the place of those accomplishments which are the fruits of early intense application, and rendered Mr. Dundas, for a series of years, one of the most able, active, and successful servants of Government in all the different official departments which he filled. The immense load of business that devolved upon Mr. Dundas, did not prevent his indulging a strong social propensity; and there was not any of his contemporaries who

either imparted or enjoyed more pleasure in the circle of convivial parties.

I spent a day with Captain Arden, one of the resident directors of Greenwich Hospital, which, I am sorry to acknowledge, lowered the good opinion I had previously formed of that benevolent institution. Instead of the contentment and happiness I expected to find among persons who, after a life of toil and danger, were furnished with every external comfort, the far greater proportion, as I was informed upon the spot, were querulous and fretful, and many of them from morning to evening embroiled in contentions with one another, often subjected to disgraceful censures, and sometimes to the infliction of corporal punishments, on account of gross misdemeanours. Several culprits were brought before Captain Arden in the morning when I was with him. I regretted that, among so many costly accommodations, the trustees have neglected to provide a library for the instruction and amusement of pensioners capable of reading. The Bible and the Common Prayer-book are the only volumes to which the inhabitants of this asylum have access. The bed-chamber assigned me upon my visit at Greenwich was that which

the celebrated Captain Cook* had occupied when he filled the station in which Captain Arden was now placed.

The most brilliant spectacle I beheld at this time in London, was the review of all the volunteer companies belonging to the city and its environs, in Hyde Park, by his Majesty on his birthday.† I marched at six o'clock in the morning from Lord Grenville's office, with Sir James Burges, at the head of a company of Volunteers under his command, and was permitted to remain in the ranks—a privilege which I understood belonged to me as one of his Majesty's chaplains. From seven o'clock, when we took our station near the walnut trees, till ten, when his Majesty entered the park with his suit, we were exposed to incessant heavy rain. I was completely drenched, standing, too, up to the ankles in water, and wished to retire from the ground, but such was the density of the surrounding crowd, that it was impossible to penetrate beyond them

* Captain Cook was appointed a Captain of Greenwich Hospital after his return in 1774 from his second voyage. He left England again in July 1776, on the service in which he lost his life.—Ed.

† 4th June 1800. There were present at this review 12,000 men under arms.—Ed.

till after his Majesty had passed the ranks. I have often since reflected with pleasure upon my having seen such a multitude, the largest I had ever beheld, assembled in the cause of loyalty, exhibiting the most satisfactory pledge for the safety of the metropolis against the dangers which a few years before had been the cause of the greatest alarm and terror.

After having fixed the day of leaving the city, I was introduced to Dr. Porteous,* the Bishop of London, by Mr. Warner, a friend of Mr. Chilvers,† and was so much pleased with the kind reception I met with from his lordship, that I readily consented to delay my journey in consequence of a pressing invitation to dine with him the following week. According to the Bishop's request, I went to Fulham at an early hour. I have seldom met with any person more courteous and communicative, or who, on so short an acquaintance, has left upon my mind a higher respect for his character. His conversation, relating chiefly to theological

* Born 1731, died 1808.

† Mr. Chilvers was the intimate friend of my son. He was, upon Sir Walter Farquhar's retirement, introduced to Sir Walter's patients, and succeeded to his business as an apothecary. I met with great kindness and attention from him when in London, 1800.

literature, impressed me with the most favourable opinion of his critical taste and liberal sentiments.

I had the good fortune to be introduced by the Bishop to Dr. Majendie, Dean of St. Paul's, who had been recently appointed to the bishopric of Chester, and returned with him in his carriage to London in the evening, when our conversation turned upon Park's Travels, published a short time before. The Doctor assured me that Bryan Edwards was the composer of that work, and that he had the best access to know the fact, being not only a member of the African Society, but having often been a witness of Mr. Park's putting his notes into the hands of Edwards, who afterwards arranged and transfused them into a collected and expanded narrative. When I mention this circumstance, I embrace the opportunity of observing, that the style of Park's Travels appears to me more simple, and not less elegant, than that of Edwards' History of Jamaica; and, from the later specimens of Park's letters and writings when there was no possibility, and, indeed, when there exists no suspicion of his having been indebted to the direct aid or critical advice of any coadjutor, I am of opinion that his natural talents appear to

have been fully adequate to the composition of the work that bears his name.*

In the end of July 1800 I left London, having taken my passage in a Berwick smack. We had a tedious passage of ten days.

* "An abstract of the expedition, prepared by Mr. Bryan Edwards, Secretary to the African Association, from materials furnished by the traveller himself, was printed, and distributed among the members. . . . . It was at the same time announced that a complete narrative would be prepared and published by Park himself. The composition of the work occupied him till the spring of 1799, when it was published. . . . . It is clear that, unaccustomed to literary composition, he formed his book upon the model of Bryan Edwards' abstract; but that it was his own composition, there seems no good reason to doubt."—Knight's *English Cyclopædia* (1858), article *Mungo Park*.—Ed.

CHAPTER IX.

1741-1800.

I WISH, before concluding these Memoirs, to take a brief retrospect of the state of society in Scotland, and the condition of the country in the earlier period of my life. Many of the facts contained in the following chapter are, of course, strictly applicable only to the district where I have myself mostly resided, and have had the best opportunity of personal observation.*

I begin with some particulars relating to the personal habits and accommodation of the people. Among all classes, as great an improvement has taken place with respect to dress as in almost any

* This chapter, though originally written in 1814, when the rest of the Memoirs was completed, appears to have received some additions in the year 1827 or 1828. In one of these years it formed the basis of a paper read by the author before the Royal Society of Edinburgh.—Ed.

other article. Before the year 1760 none of the poor, or only a small proportion of them, wore stockings. Even in the houses of gentlemen of high rank, the maid-servants seldom used them in the earlier part of the day while employed in servile work. The celebrated Charles Townshend* used to give a ludicrous description of his being received by a "female porter" without stockings or shoes, when he paid his respects to Lord President Craigie† in the Lawnmarket, Edinburgh, in 1758 or 1759, and also of the practice, at that time general in the country, of the women treading their dirty linen, instead of washing it with their hands.

* Born 1725, died 1767. He was in Scotland (at Dalkeith House) for two months in the year 1759.—Ed.

† Robert Craigie of Glendoick, who was appointed King's Advocate in 1742, and promoted to the presidency of the Court of Session in 1754, on the death of the elder Lord Arniston. For some account of the high estimation in which this judge was held by his contemporaries, see Tytler's *Life of Lord Kames*, vol. i., pp. 58, 59. To shew the rapid change of manners in Edinburgh, Mr. Creech mentions that "Lord President Craigie's house in 1763 [probably the same house in the Lawnmarket which was visited by Mr. Townshend], was, in 1783, possessed by a *rouping wife*, or saleswoman of old furniture." See the "Letters to Sir John Sinclair respecting the Mode of Living, Arts, Commerce, etc., of Edinburgh in 1763, and since that Period." These Letters, printed in the old *Statistical Account*, vol. vi., and also in Arnot's *History of Edinburgh*, contain a great number of curious particulars of the same kind, and relating to the same period, as those in this chapter of the present work.—Ed.

The dress both of men and women alike in the middle and higher ranks exhibited by turns the extremes of gaudy ostentation and disgusting slovenliness. Not only the hats, but the body clothes of gentlemen in full dress, were fringed with gold or silver lace. The hats were all then cocked. (Velvet caps, however, were worn by many of the gentlemen, and leather caps frequently by the farmers.) At an early period of my life a few of the country gentlemen of more advanced age wore swords when in full dress, and I knew aged persons who remembered swords being held as an indispensable article of fashionable costume. The discontinuance of this practice may be considered as in a moral view an important improvement on the fashions of our fathers. On the occasion of sudden quarrels, especially in drunken brawls, the ready command of a dangerous weapon was unfortunately the frequent cause of bloodshed. Several instances of this fatality had happened within the memory of persons with whom I was acquainted in early life, as that of Colonel Stewart of Stewartfield, who was mortally wounded by Sir Gilbert Elliot of Stobbs in a tavern at Jedburgh, in consequence of a party dispute at an election

dinner; and Mr. Halliburton of Muirhouselaw, found stabbed to death near Ancrum Bridge, and who was supposed to have fallen, in similar circumstances, by the hands of Rutherfurd, the laird of Fairnington. They had set out together from Jedburgh the previous night, both of them being excited by wine, and were overheard by persons whom they passed on the road engaged in angry altercation.

Ladies when visiting or receiving company, wore silk gowns, or riding habits with gold or gilded buttons and fringes. A silk plaid wrapped loosely about the head and body was the prevailing fashion at church. Patches on the face formed a part of the full dress of ladies, particularly of those further advanced in life. This fashion was beginning to wear out in my early life. I have not seen any instance of it for the last fifty or fifty-five years; but I recollect many persons who followed it before that time, and have seen the patch-boxes, which once made a part of the furniture of every ladies' dressing-closet.

The undress of both sexes was often coarse and slovenly beyond any example even among the lower orders in modern days. Gentlemen used to

walk about all the morning in greasy night-caps and dirty night-gowns (dressing-gowns), or thread-bare coats. The elder ladies wore large linen caps called *toys*, encroaching on the face, and tied under the chin, with worsted short-gowns and aprons. The word toy is probably derived from the French *toque*, the hood worn by women of mean condition in France.

The clergy in my early life were not less slovenly than their neighbours. Many of them wore coloured clothes of very coarse materials. Blue was the common colour for full dress among persons of my own profession in Scotland at that time.

Most families, both in the higher and in the middle ranks, used tea at breakfast; but among the latter it was only recently introduced, or beginning to be introduced in the afternoon, and then exclusively on the occasion of receiving company.* The tea "equipage" at breakfast was

* I have heard my father say that tea was prescribed by the physician to his mother when she was indisposed, and that it was sold at 25s. per pound. This must have been before or soon after 1710. I have inspected the household books of the Duke of Queensberry from 1697 to 1708, in which every article of diet is recorded, but tea is never mentioned. The Lady Duchess' breakfast consisted of pigeon pie, saddle of mutton, and the like substantial fare.

placed on the uncovered table, small linen napkins being handed to all the guests. Though wheaten bread was partly used, yet cakes, or "bannocks" of barley and pease-meal, and oat cakes, formed the principal household bread in gentlemen's families; and in those of the middle class, on ordinary occasions, no other bread was ever thought of. Potatoes made a part of the food of the common people, but were considered a luxury, being cultivated only in gardens, and more costly than meal. I do not recollect any instance of potatoes being planted in the open field previous to the year 1760. Horticulture, indeed, was not much studied, and the culinary vegetables then raised were few in number, and inferior in quality to those which are now found in every gentleman's garden. "Open kail," cabbages, turnips, and carrots, were the only vegetables in general use.

The gardens of the country gentlemen were usually situated near the dwelling-house, and often in such proximity that the family might enter the garden by a private door in the ground-floor of the house. It was then the practice to lay out the walks, which were generally grass-walks, in straight lines, bordered by boxwood or holly

hedges, neatly trimmed, and sometimes whimsically shaped into grotesque figures of men or animals. The parterres or square plots enclosed by these hedges were devoted to fruit trees—apples, pears, gooseberries, currants—and vegetables. As far as I recollect, there was not any great variety of fruit trees. Hot beds were the only artificial means employed for quickening the growth of indigenous plants, or rearing exotics. I do not recollect to have seen any green-houses or hot-houses earlier than the year 1760. The first attempt to cultivate pine apples was made in the garden of Dean, on the Water of Leith, then occupied by the Chief Baron Ord;* and his example was followed by Lord Somerville, who used to send pine apples as a rare present to his neighbours, Lord Milton† and Mr. Mackenzie of Delvin. The culture of flowers, which has of late become fashionable to the great increase of innocent enjoyment, was rarely met with. The shrubs and

* Robert Ord, Esq., Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Scotland, an office which he held till the year 1775.—Ed.

† Andrew Fletcher, Esq. of Milton. He sat on the Bench forty-three years (from 1724 to 1767), and for a part of the time as Lord Justice-Clerk. His political influence, through Archibald Duke of Argyle, is referred to afterwards. See also *supra*, p. 35, *note*.—Ed.

flowers found in gardens in my younger days were few, and were suffered to grow in almost the same wild and uncultivated state as if they had remained in the fields. Tulips may be mentioned as an exception. They were at that time greatly prized, and, as I have heard, purchased at very high prices.

Butcher meat was rarely eaten by labourers and servants, except in the houses of stock farmers, who found their account in consuming at home that part of their stock which was unfit for sale. There was no regular butcher market except in towns and the larger villages, and the articles brought to market consisted chiefly of mutton, lamb, and veal. Even in principal towns beef was seldom to be had in the market, except perhaps on the occasion of fairs, or the county meetings which brought together a number of country gentlemen, and usually ended in conviviality. The day before the arrival of the Duke of Buccleuch's commissioners to let his land at Hawick, which took place annually, and was called the *Land setting*, a fatted ox was purchased for their entertainment, and that of their guests. On this occasion the children, and not a few of the older

inhabitants, were in waiting for the approach of the victim, and accompanied it from its entrance into the town to the butcher's door, where it was slaughtered. I have heard from old people in Hawick that, as in the heathen sacrifices, it had long been the practice for the devoted animal to be adorned with a chaplet of flowers, and that music was not wanting—the town piper leading the procession, playing on his pipes. This I do not recollect to have seen, but I have myself been a witness of the crowd attracted by the approach of the fatted ox on such occasions.

The following is a statement of the price of butcher meat, founded on my own personal knowledge, when I commenced a householder in the year 1770:—Beef then cost 2d. or 2½d., never exceeding 4d. per lb.; lamb, 1½d.; veal, 4d. and 5d.; and mutton in like proportion. I have been told by my older parishioners at Jedburgh that within their remembrance the whole carcass of a lamb was often purchased for 1s. or 1s. 6d.; butter at 4d., cheese at 3d. per lb.*

In families where butcher meat made a part

* The pound by which the beef was sold contained 17½ ounces, the pound of butter 24 ounces, and I believe the cheese the same.

of the daily fare, salted meat was used almost exclusively during the winter months, when any other was rarely to be found in the market, a circumstance arising from the scarcity of forage. The only winter food for cattle consisted of straw, and coarse hay from natural grasses, the cultivation of turnips and artificial grasses being then unknown. Convivial parties were always plentiful rather than either elegant or ostentatious; and during winter, barley broth, and salt beef, with a boiled fowl and greens, were standing dishes at dinner in every gentleman's house. Though broth was so commonly used, the barley, a principal ingredient, was ill prepared, and of the coarsest quality. It was not milled or scaled, but bruised or beaten in a trough, something like an apothecary's mortar, and called the *knocking stone*, which was at that time an indispensable article in every kitchen. After being then winnowed in what was called a *wecht* or sieve, and rubbed with a coarse cloth, the barley was ready for use. The *knocking* of the barley formed a material part of the cook's daily work.

In the kitchen, the utensils were few and clumsy. I do not remember to have seen a

roasting-jack in my early life. The spit was turned by one of the servants, and sometimes by a dog trained for that cruel service. The dog was made to turn a large wooden wheel in a box attached to the spit. The dogs, I have heard, used to hide themselves or run away when they observed indications that there was to be a roast for dinner.

Though pork was sometimes presented at table, few ate of it when fresh, and even when cured it was not generally acceptable. In families of my own rank, the beverage offered to ordinary visitors, as I have already had occasion to mention, consisted of home-brewed ale and a glass of brandy, or when there was greater ceremony, claret and brandy-punch. Tobacco, in all its forms, was more in use than it is now. Many young ladies, and perhaps the greater number of married men and women, carried snuff boxes. The habit prevailed so generally, that it was not uncommon for lovers to present their sweethearts with snuff boxes, which were to be purchased for that purpose, adorned with devices emblematical of love and constancy.

Household furniture was simple and inexpen-

sive—wooden platters, for instance, being more or less in use in almost every house, and exclusively in those of the farmers, and of many of the clergy. In some families, as in the families of the country gentlemen, pewter vessels were also to be found; with a set of delft, or china, for the second course at table, in the case of such of them as could afford pretentious three o'clock dinners. (The ordinary hour of dinner was twelve or one o'clock, and never later than three o'clock in the most fashionable houses.) A punch-bowl, and teacups and saucers of china were, however, always considered as indispensable, and were ostentatiously arranged in what was called *the cupboard*—a small press with open or glazed door, which was fixed in a conspicuous part of the dining-room. Mahogany tables, except for tea, were rarely seen, even in houses richly furnished. The dinner tables were usually of oak, and, by constant rubbing, shone like a mirror. Carpets were found only in the principal rooms—the drawing-room and dining-room; indeed, except in houses of some pretension, they were altogether unknown. I have been told, that sixty or seventy years ago, no more than two carpets

existed in the whole town of Jedburgh, one being in the manse, and the other in the house of Provost Lookup. Hung bells and bell-pulls were, I think, hardly known in my early days; at least, I do not recollect to have seen them. A hand-bell lay on the dining-room table, which was used for calling the servants, and not unfrequently the poker or heel of the shoe served the purpose, and the better that few of the floors were deafened or plastered. Household clocks were confined to large houses, and the possession of a watch was a distinction which did not descend below the middle classes of society.

I could add many other particulars of this kind, as that the drawing-room often contained a bed—of course, the most showy in the house; that in many gentlemen's houses there were no grates in the bed-rooms, the fire, when a fire there was, being kindled on the hearth; or that turf and peat were the fuel then chiefly burned, even in the public rooms. The grates in these rooms were generally made of brass, and were highly polished. They stood detached from the back and sides of the fire-place, which were rendered ornamental by being covered with painted china tiles.

In these principal apartments, too, the walls were panelled with oak (seldom painted), or were lined with arras, or imitation of arras, with representations of the most interesting events in sacred history—for instance, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, or the judgment of Solomon; and sometimes hunting scenes, horse races, wrestling matches, and the like. But this applies chiefly to large mansions. In the houses of persons of middle rank, the walls were generally neither painted nor draped.

English blankets were almost unknown; and one of the burdens unrepiningly submitted to by the last generation was the pressure of from five to ten pairs of blankets during the hours devoted to rest. Box-beds, still to be seen in cottages, from which the air was almost entirely excluded during the night by means of sliding doors, were in general use, in spite of all experience of the pernicious effects of this arrangement. Such, however, as the beds were, in entertaining visitors, it was not reckoned any deviation from respect to assign one bed to two guests, even although the two gentlemen, or the two ladies, as the case might be, thus assorted, might be before unacquainted with each other, or of different age and rank.

At the time I refer to, almost every house in town or country was provided with a stone seat (often covered with turf), projecting from the front wall, which went by the name of the *dais*,* and which afforded the members of the family, in fine weather, the means of enjoying the fresh air—too seldom admitted into the house—and of receiving passing visits from their acquaintances. The *dais* formed a convenient resort for gossips. Although no window tax then existed, the windows were fewer as well as smaller than they are now. Another common appendage was the *loupin'-on-stane* a small erection of wood or masonry, for the accommodation of ladies in mounting or dismounting their horses. At that time, almost all ladies were accustomed to travel on horseback, even when going to church or paying visits. They rode on pads behind their husbands or servants.

The shops in the country towns were small and ill lighted, with naked walls, seldom plastered, and often not even floored or paved. In such towns, many of the houses consisted of no more

* "Deis, or dais, a seat on the outside of a country house or cottage; from the old French *dais*, a throne or canopy."—Jameson's *Scottish Dictionary*.

than one storey, and when of two storeys, had the access to the upper rooms by an outside stair, sometimes unrailed and therefore dangerous. The doors and passages were so low, that to make one's way to the apartments, one had to assume a stooping posture. The windows were latticed like prisons. This was the state of all the older houses. In inland districts, most of the houses were thatched with straw; many cottages, and some churches, with heath. The Tower of Hawick, now the principal inn, was the only slated house there in the year 1757. Near the sea-coast, slates and tiles were more common.

In all the principal towns, and in many of the villages, the market cross was, in my early days, still extant. It was used as a convenient place of rendezvous, as well as for public proclamations and other official purposes. Most of the towns, too, retained their ancient gateways at the chief approaches from the country.

The wages of servants since the period of my becoming a householder in 1770, have advanced at least fourfold. I then paid one of my maid-servants £1 : 5s., another £1 : 10s., for the half-year; and my man-servant £4 yearly. The

annual wages of a man-servant of the same kind may now be stated at £16 or £18, besides board; and the wages of a maid-servant at £7 or £8 per annum. Mr. Scott, who resides at Monklaw in my parish, at an advanced age, has informed me that his father, fifty years ago, hired his female servants for 10s., with a pair of shoes, for the half-year; and his ploughmen for £1 : 5s., with the like gift, or *bountith* as it was then called.

Whether owing to their having less hard work during the day, or from habits of industry and frugality, servants were accustomed to dedicate the winter evenings at the kitchen fire to some home manufactures now unknown; for instance, to giving the finishing work to their shoes. At that time none of the ploughmen, and few of the women servants, purchased their shoes in a complete state. The shoes of the men, called *brogues*, were made of leather tanned from horse hides, and, as purchased, had only a single sole (they hence went by the name of *single-soled shoes*). It was the part of the purchasers to double, sometimes to treble the soles with their own hands. Servants and labourers were always provided with the necessary tools for this work. The shoes were extremely

clumsy, but did not cost above a fith or sixth part of the price of those which they now wear.

With regard to health and comfort, the advantages in favour of the present generation are so obvious as to supersede discussion. Greater attention is now paid to cleanliness and ventilation by more frequent house-cleansings and open windows; nor can it be doubted that the improvements which have taken place in these respects, and also in medical science, have, in an incalculable degree, conduced to the preservation of life and health. The small-pox, before the practice of innoculation, not only cut off a great proportion of the young children, but also proved fatal to very many persons in advanced life. In the case of those who recovered, besides the personal disfigurement, incurable weakness, or even loss of sight, were among the consequences of this virulent distemper, of which every one who happened to have escaped the infection during the period of infancy and childhood, lived, in these days, in unceasing terror. Nor have such influences, and particularly the more liberal use of water and pure air (a result of growing refinement of manners), tended only to promote the preservation and recovery of

health in individual cases. They have even led to the extirpation of some forms of disease that were common and very destructive in the early period of my life. I could give more than one instance, but will mention one instance in particular. In most of the parishes in Scotland not exclusively in marshy grounds, but in situations the most favoured by nature, a great proportion of the inhabitants of all ranks and ages were subject to ague. There have occurred but one or two cases of that disease during the long period (forty-one years) of my incumbency in the parish of Jedburgh; and I believe that a proportionable abatement, or a total cessation of it has taken place in other parishes throughout the country. Fevers, too, are less prevalent and less dangerous, especially a low nervous fever which proved very fatal during the autumn and spring months. The persons most liable to this epidemic were the cottagers, whose houses were surrounded with stagnant water and other abominations, insomuch that during winter it was almost impossible to approach them dry-shod.

As far as happiness depends upon external accommodation and appliances, all classes of the

community ought to be happier now than they were in my early life. The poor especially are better fed, better clothed, and better lodged. Their diet is more ample, of more wholesome quality, and better dressed; their houses cleaner and more commodious; their clothes neater, and, by the general use of flannel, better adapted to the inclemency of a northern latitude.

A taste for amusements and festivities has rather declined, particularly among the middle and lower classes. Valentine's e'en, and Hallowe'en, the latter of which has been so graphically described by Burns,* used to be anniversaries observed in every house by the assemblage of young people, and abundance of mirth and harmless frolic. They are hardly known to the rising generation. I do not happen to be aware whether the mode of celebrating these days was a remnant of the customs of our fathers in Roman Catholic times, or had been introduced to throw contempt on Roman Catholic usages. It appears certain that some of the more bigotted Protestants did, after the Reformation, make it

* Burns' Life and Works, by Chambers, vol. i., p. 146. Hallowe'en is the eve of all Saints' Day, as Valentine's e'en is the eve of the anniversary of St. Valentine.—Ed.

their study to cast reproach upon holidays by converting them into seasons of revelry. I recollect an old schoolmistress, the daughter of a Mr. Brown, the schoolmaster of Jedburgh at the beginning of last century, who regularly treated her scholars to a dance or ball on Christmas day and Good Friday; and who told me that this had been the common practice of all schools in her younger days. This abuse will appear less surprising to those who know that there existed a statute of the Scottish Parliament prohibiting the observance of Christmas under heavy penalties, and that it cost Queen Anne's Tory ministry no small exertion of influence to obtain the repeal of a statute so acceptable to popular prejudice.* However this may be, I confess that I rather regret the discontinuance of the scenes of harmless amusement which used to take place on the anniversaries in question.

Many of our national games, as handball, football, ninepins, golf, and curling, though not discontinued, are less generally practised than when I was a younger man. Bowls were then a common amusement. Every county town was provided

* See *supra*, p. 236, *note*.

with a public bowling-green for the diversion of the inhabitants in the summer evenings. All classes were represented among the players, and it was usual for persons of different ranks to take part in the same game. A bowling-green usually formed part of the *policy* or pleasure grounds of country houses. At these private bowling-greens ladies also shared in the amusement, thus rendering it greatly more attractive.

There was then more merry-making at the celebration of marriages. On these occasions a great number of friends and neighbours was always invited to be present at the ceremony; and, in the case of families who could afford the expense, it often happened that several days were spent in feasting and revelry. The marriages of the humbler classes, were, as a rule, celebrated in church, and attracted a crowd of attendants. A fiddler strutted in front of the company playing some merry air, till he approached the churchyard gate, where he waited their return, and then resuming his office, accompanied them back to the bridal house and to the bridal feast.

Penny weddings were among the characteristics of these times; but they gave occasion to so many

irregularities that the church had at an early period expressly prohibited them,* and their practical abolition is an improvement in social habits which I rejoice to have seen. The design was a plausible one. When a young couple married without the means of furnishing their house, the penny wedding was an obvious expedient for providing the lacking supplies. It was so called because the guests paid for the entertainment. On these occasions it was the custom for the bride and bridegroom to invite or permit not only acquaintances of their own station, but their richer neighbours, to attend the celebration of the marriage. A plentiful dinner was prepared, the principal dish being the *bride's pie*, as it was called, followed by a ball in the nearest barn; and the reckoning was paid by a contribution from every guest liberal enough to afford a surplus for the happy but needy pair. Such miscellaneous gatherings could not fail to lead to evil.

I have already mentioned some features in the method of school education in my own youth. The discipline was universally more rigorous than it is now. Austerity, indeed, in the treatment of

* *Acts of Assembly*, 1645, *sess. ult.*; etc.—Ed.

the young, was not confined to schools, but was the rule also in the family—parents keeping their children, even when grown to mature years, at a great distance, and exacting from them a ceremonious attention to the forms of outward respect. In country towns, where the teacher was, as he still is, required to be qualified to teach the classics, a greater proportion of the scholars learned a little Latin than is now at all customary. Many of the children of mechanics, and others in the same humble station, spent two or three years at the grammar schools for this purpose—even those of them who had no view to liberal professions. If the practice generally led to a great waste of time, it sometimes, on the other hand, was the means of awakening a thirst for learning, and of opening the path of advancement to boys whose talents might otherwise have remained undeveloped. The school-fees at Dunse, when I attended school (1752), were, for reading, 1s., for reading and writing, 1s. 6d., for Latin, 2s. 6d., per quarter. The same fees were, I believe, charged at Kelso and Hawick.

A great change has been introduced since that period in the education of young ladies. Sew-

ing, embroidery, pastry, and cookery, were then considered the most important branches of learning for a good housewife, and were taught at all the female schools in Edinburgh. Instruction in music* and drawing was confined to young ladies of high rank. Within my remembrance, many even of the latter were shamefully deficient in the elementary, and now universal accomplishments of writing and spelling.

I do not lament the change of manners in this respect. The propriety and advantage of the more liberal education given to young ladies, may be contested by those who suspect that a refined taste and the possession of high accomplishments have a tendency to lessen application to those homely duties, which are the peculiar province of the wife and mother. The question turns upon a matter of fact. Are household arrangements less attended to? Is the tenderness of maternal affection blunted? Are the nurture and education of children neglected by wives and mothers who have profited by the opportunities of a liberal educa-

* The musical instruments then in use were the harp and spinet—chiefly the latter. The pianoforte was not, I believe, introduced into Scotland till after the year 1760.

tion? Where there is a substratum of good sense, and that modesty which is the native characteristic of every true woman, I believe the result has been found to be the very reverse. And it cannot be doubted, that from the same cause there have arisen at once an increase of those attractions of the fair sex which sweeten domestic and social intercourse, and also with the elevation of their own tastes and habits, an augmentation of their influence in elevating the general tone of society.

There were no circulating libraries or reading clubs in any of the country towns. Any books read by the working people—all of whom had been taught to read—were such as they themselves possessed; and a select number of treatises of popular divinity, like Boston's *Fourfold State*, the same author's *Crook in the Lot*, and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, might be found in almost every cottage. The books purchased by the clergy were chiefly professional. Some of the country gentlemen collected considerable libraries, which, together with the Greek and Latin classics, consisted, in great proportion, of voluminous works that treated of law and divinity.

Manufactures were rare in the country, and

restricted to articles of home demand. There were few shops in the country towns; nor were they furnished with such a variety of commodities, or with commodities of such value, as they now contain. Families depended upon being supplied with many of their ordinary purchases by pedlars or itinerant merchants, who made them regular visits, and arrived with a budget of news, collected over the wide extent of their rounds—the more gratifying because other channels of intelligence were then scanty. This also reminds me of an economical custom, practised almost in every family, but which is now in a great measure fallen into disuse. A master tailor, with his journeymen, was engaged to attend at appointed times in every house, and the clothes of the family were made and repaired under the inspection of his employers. Like the pedlars, the tailors were the bearers of all the public news.

In the country towns, the shoemakers were more numerous than any other body of mechanics. They chiefly depended upon large orders for shoes from America—a very precarious source of employment, which often failed them, exposing their families to times of great destitution.

The trades of maltsters and tanners, or "skinners," had been the most flourishing in all the border towns at the beginning of the last century; but the articles of malt and skins having been subjected to the English duties by the treaty of Union, an end was put to the large profits derived from their exportation into England. Many still pursued the same traffic in a contraband way during the early period of my life; but the number of them has been gradually diminishing; and at Jedburgh there is now only one "skinner," and not a single maltster. I have seen twenty-four maltkilns and floors, which, though most of them were then in ruins, had been all in occupation within the memory of my older parishioners.

In all the country towns were to be found a great number of writers, then called lawyers, and they were generally the most thriving and opulent members of the community. From the litigious temper of the people, more prevalent then than it is now, and the number of entangled, doubtful questions, arising from the want of precedents, an abundance of litigation supplied this class of men with constant employment. But I believe that transactions of a more private nature, particularly

the borrowing and lending money, formed their most lucrative employment. There were no banks in any of the country towns at the period to which I refer. Lending of money brought great profit to these men. Their practice was to advance very inadequate sums on the security of houses or lands, which, when the borrower happened to fall into arrears, were adjudged or consigned to the lender. This species of usury was not monopolised by the writers, but sometimes carried on in concert with them, or independently, by persons of all professions who had acquired a little ready money. The want of banks and bankers must have been felt as a great inconvenience by gentlemen who travelled to distant places. It is a fact, attested to me by the best authority, that the father of John Duke of Roxburghe, not later than the year 1720, used to receive a hundred pounds monthly by the waggon from Scotland for the expenditure of his family while he resided in London.

Few of the towns in Scotland enjoyed the benefit of an established post-office. In Edinburgh the arrival and departure of the post took place

only four days in the week; and I was informed, sixty years ago, by officials who had been long employed in the post-office, that Provost Alexander, the only banker in Edinburgh at the beginning of the last century, had often received a solitary letter by the London mail. Sixty years ago the post from London did not arrive in Edinburgh till the evening of the fifth day. The mail was then deposited in a large portmanteau placed behind the rider.

So late as the year 1766, the town of Hawick had not obtained the accommodation of a post-office, though it had then made a considerable progress in different branches of manufacture, particularly of carpets. Sir Gilbert Elliot, grandfather of Lord Minto, found it necessary, in 1767, to exert his utmost interest for permission to make the experiment of a Hawick post thrice in the week, to and from Edinburgh and Berwick, on the condition of securing government against loss. Mr. John Elliot, one of the trading burgesses, tendered his gratuitous service as post-master to the town for the first year; and it was found upon trial, after the deduction of all the necessary expenses for salaries of post-boys, etc., a clear profit

of forty pounds per annum would have accrued to Government. The profit for several years past has exceeded one thousand pounds. To remedy the difficulty of conveying epistolary correspondence, and a tardy circulation of public intelligence, one of the carriers in every market town received a salary of a few pounds yearly, on condition of his returning in the course of the week from Edinburgh, and being the bearer of all the letters and newspapers. He was distinguished by the name of *the post.* The salary paid out of the funds of the town of Jedburgh for this purpose was four pounds per annum.

The improved state of the roads exhibits one of the most striking proofs of the increasing prosperity of the country. Before the year 1750 I do not think that there existed any turnpike road in Scotland, except the post road from Edinburgh to Berwick, and perhaps also from Edinburgh to Glasgow. The parish roads, even to the church and market towns, were unfit for wheel carriages, and in bad weather altogether impracticable. There were few bridges over the rivers. Since I can recollect, the Tweed, throughout its whole length, was crossed by only two,—one at Peebles, and

the other at Berwick,* and travellers often perished by attempting to ford the rivers in flood.

Few inns were then to be met with on the most frequented roads, in which the traveller could either eat or sleep with comfort. They were so ill provided with the most necessary articles, that on a journey people used to carry a knife and fork in a case deposited in the side pocket of their small clothes. (And I may here mention that it was not only in travelling that this case and its contents were called into requisition. Most of the clergy, on the occasion of their catechetical examinations — when, according to ancient custom, it was their duty to dine with the farmer of the district visited — and the greater number of the company at weddings and public dinners were similarly provided. The knife most in use was called *Jockteleg*, a corruption of *John of Liege*, the most celebrated cutler in that city in the century before last, and the inventor of that species of manufacture.) Though drinking was more frequent then than now, and carried to greater excess, yet the ale-houses (as indeed also private families) were but scantily provided

* The distance between Peebles and Berwick is about sixty miles — Ed.

with glasses, and I have seen a single glass go round a large company. Armstrong of Sorbie, a noted border toper, who died within my remembrance, lamenting in his latter days the degeneracy of the times, said "that it was a better world when there were more bottles and fewer glasses."

No carriages for posting, and no stage-coaches, were in use in 1756, except on the post road between Edinburgh and Berwick. Stage-coaches between Edinburgh and Leith, which ran hourly from nine in the morning till eight at night, and a stage-coach which ran from Edinburgh to London monthly, being ten days on the road, were the only carriages of that description known before 1760.

Carts were rare, and hardly in use, either for the carriage of goods or for agricultural purposes in the country. All articles of exportation from thence to Edinburgh were carried in sacks on the backs of horses. Manure was carried out to the fields in "creels" or baskets slung over the back of the horse. The crops of corn and hay were brought to the stack-yard on sledges.

There is a great change within my recollection in the market price of land, and in the

system of letting farms, as well as in the mode of cultivating them. The rent of land may be fairly estimated as having since the middle of last century increased in amount threefold, in some instances fourfold, and in none less than one hundred per cent; and its price, when brought to the market, has advanced in a corresponding proportion. In the neighbourhood of Jedburgh, examples occur of farms now yielding in the form of rent thirty per cent per annum on the capital, or original price at which they were purchased sixty years before. There are several instances of ten and fifteen per cent interest upon the purchase-money paid forty or fifty years ago; and I have no doubt of the same advance being found in other districts. I have not sufficient practical knowledge of the subject to be enabled to state with precision what proportion of the augmented price of land ought to be ascribed to the depreciation in the value of money, and what to an increase in the amount or value of the produce. Both have doubtless co-operated in producing the result. The increase in the yield of grain crops, and of food for rearing stock, has in the case of many farms been commensurate to the advanced rent.

People now living can remember when the same fields did not yield above a third part of the quantity of corn, or above a third part of the food for cattle, now raised from them.

There can be no doubt, however, that the rise in the price of land is also in part attributable to the increased competition for this kind of property, owing to the great number of Scotchmen who have recently returned to this country from the British colonies with large fortunes, and with a natural desire to invest them in the purchase of Scotch estates. After the Treaty of Union (1706), the Scotch began to emigrate to the American and other colonies. A great proportion, too, of the younger sons of gentlemen in Scotland obtained commissions in the Dutch regiments which were at that time raised in Scotland. Of all these few returned to their native country—Jamaica in particular, from the number who died there, was long known by the name of "the grave of Scotland;"—and of those who did return, few added to the stock of national wealth. The fortunes, however, brought from the East Indies alone in the course of the last fifty years, have been so large, and have been so generally applied to the purchase of

estates, that the property thus acquired now bears a great proportion to the whole landed property in Scotland. This is remarkably illustrated in my own neighbourhood. Not fewer than eight estates of considerable value have, in my recollection, been bought in Roxburghshire by gentlemen who have returned from the East Indies. Before leaving this subject, I may add another fact connected with it, namely—that not less than two-thirds of the landed property in the same county have been transferred by sale to new proprietors within the period in question.

Farming was generally in a wretched state in my early life. The want of leases was equally pernicious to the interests of tenants and landlords. It debarred the farmer from the enlargement of domestic accommodations, and repressed the inclination, as it denied the means, of those agricultural improvements which have of late contributed so rapidly to the fertility of the soil, the advancement of rents, and the liberal recompense of industry. Even at that time, certainly, there occurred exceptional instances of tenants, especially in store farms, attaining opulence, and also commencing agricultural improvements. But in gene-

ral, the farmers discovered an unwillingness to run the risk of experiments, or to depart from the modes of husbandry recommended by ancient usage. Agricultural improvements, as I can well remember, were begun by a few enlightened and enterprising gentlemen who farmed their own estates, as Mr. Hume of Ninewells,* Mr. Carre of Nisbet, afterwards Lord Nisbet,† and Lord Kames; and their example was followed by tenants who had obtained leases—the latter carrying on improvements to a greater extent, and also at less expense. Mr. Brown of Ellistown was the first (in Roxburghshire) to make the experiment of improving land by the use of lime. In many of these cases in which tenant farmers acquired wealth by farming, their leases were obtained by the tax of *grassums,* or fines paid on entering into and renewing the lease. Several tenants of Sir G. Elliot of Stobbs,‡ who held their farms on these terms, having fixed rents, with a continual depreciation of the value of money, and increase in the value of the farm produce, made so much money by farming, even in those days, as to be enabled to purchase estates.

* The elder brother of David Hume, the historian. † Died 1756.

‡ The father of Lord Heathfield. He died in 1764.

The working cattle of the farmers were poorly fed, and of much inferior strength to those now employed. Artificial grass being little cultivated, the cattle were put out to graze in what was called "the outfield," which, from having been long in pasture, and without manure, was overrun with weeds and moss, and yielded but a meagre and unwholesome pasture. It was not uncommon for some of the tenants to postpone the ploughing of their fallow ground, that it might afford throughout the winter an addition to the always scanty supply of fodder. The winter provision for the horses was chiefly pease-straw, and coarse hay; that for the cows oat and barley straw. Within the memory of many persons still living in Jedburgh, thistles used to be purchased for forage by those who kept horses for hired labour, a mass of them being collected and exposed for sale at the market cross every Saturday evening during the summer months. The price was from threepence to fourpence per burden.

The best effects have resulted to the farmers from the mechanical improvements made upon the implements of husbandry, and from superior skill and dexterity in the use of them. In the early

period of my life, the work performed by the plough was comparatively imperfect and slovenly, as well as expensive. Two persons were employed at each plough—one, called the ploughman, holding the stilts, and the other, called the *gadman*, or ploughboy, leading or driving the horses. I believe that the same practice still prevails in the southern counties of England.

There was another circumstance which increased the expense, and retarded the progress of agricultural science. The farmer's fellow-labourers —for at that time most of the farmers took a share in manual work—consisted of the sons or near relations of the family, who were set to labour as soon as their strength rendered them at all capable of performing it. Greater indulgence was therefore granted, both with respect to the quantity of the prescribed task, and the manner of accomplishing it.

There is not any class or description of men whose house accommodation has been more improved than that of farmers and agricultural labourers in the southern counties of Scotland. The houses of the farmers were mean, small, and inconvenient, generally of only one storey, and

often not floored. Their clothing was coarse, mostly of home-spun woollen manufacture; their diet, compared with what it now is, scanty and badly cooked; and their other domestic conveniences in every respect inferior to those which are now enjoyed by their hinds and servants. A few farmers, possessing large farms, certainly lived in great fulness and plenty; but in the comforts of cleanliness, with respect to their persons and houses, they were at best very far behind their successors. Forty years ago, when I had occasion to discharge the duty of visiting and catechising in the country part of my parish, I was under the necessity, according to long established custom, of accepting the invitation of dining with the tenant of the district, and, from the coarseness of the food and the mode of cookery, I never partook of it without disgust. There was scarcely, at that time, a tenant in the parish whom I could, in return, invite to my table; and now circumstances are so much reversed, that most of them live in a better style than I can afford.

In my early life, a profession of religion was more fashionable, and higher respect was shewn, at least, for the external forms connected with

that profession. Not to attend church was considered disreputable, and seldom occurred except in the case of some zealous adherents to the Episcopal forms of worship. The illiberality which then prevailed among all sects, did not permit religious communion between persons of different persuasions, every one of whom confounded the cause of religion with that of his own church. Several noblemen, both Presbyterians and Episcopalians, still kept chaplains in their houses for family worship; and, I believe, there were few heads of families among the lower and middle classes, who neglected the personal performance of that duty. Superstitious views regarding the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, at that time prevented many who were religiously disposed from becoming communicants till they were well advanced in years. The Sabbath was generally observed with scrupulous strictness.

Numerous vestiges of that wild, superstitious credulity, which had been nurtured amidst the darkness of the middle ages, still survived in Scotland. Not the populace only, but even many persons of good education, believed in apparitions; haunted houses and haunted woods abounded;

and innumerable ghost stories were in circulation in every parish, and implicitly believed by the bulk of the people.

Belief in witchcraft was still more prevalent. Among many of the people, every misfortune which happened in the neighbourhood was ascribed to diabolical agency; and the persons suspected of being the human instruments of this Satanic influence, were, of course, the objects of popular dread as well as hatred. At that time they were still exposed occasionally to popular outrage. *Scoring* (the operation of drawing blood from a witch above the eyebrows), then held as an infallible antidote against the baneful effects of their incantations, was actually performed on a poor woman in the parish of Ancrum, so late as the year 1775 or 1776.* I have a perfect recollection of several instances, and from aged persons I have heard many more, of summary vengeance inflicted on the unhappy victims of popular superstition, without any interference or subsequent punishment on the part of the magistrate.

The last duties to the dead were accompanied

* Another instance, in the county of Kent, happened on the 28th October 1762.—See *Annual Register*, vol. v., p. 112.

by some observances which have now fallen into disuse. Thus, in all the towns I was acquainted with, every death was immediately made known to the inhabitants by the passing bell. This was usually done by the beadle or kirk officer, who walked through the streets at a slow pace, tinkling a small bell, sometimes called the *dead-bell*, and sometimes the *passing-bell*, and, with head uncovered, intimated that a brother (or sister), whose name was given, had departed this life.* A few years ago, the officer in Jedburgh was obliged to make this announcement at once, however unseasonable the hour. A *lykewake*,† too, took place in the night, or during the several nights intervening between the death and the funeral. As the intimation made by the passing bell was understood to be a general invitation, great crowds attended the funeral. I may add, that at the time to which I refer, several of the female relatives walked in the rear of the funeral procession

* The formula in Jedburgh was much the same as in other parts of Scotland. (See Dean Ramsay's *Scottish Life and Character*, sixth edition, p. 269.)—Ed.

† "*Lyke-waik*, the watching of a dead body; from the Anglo-Saxon *lic*, a body, and *wac-ian*, to watch."—Jamieson's *Scottish Dictionary*. —Ed.

to the gate or threshold of the churchyard, where they always stopped and dispersed.

The attachment of relations to one another was warmer, and the duties founded on consanguinity were extended to a wider circle. Even distant relationship was considered as constituting an obligation to reciprocity of love and good offices. To keep alive a sense of this bond of union, relations in all circumstances addressed one another by their kindred names, as—"*uncle*," "*aunt*," "*nephew*," "*niece*," "*cousin*." From the same cause, the aged of all ranks whom I knew in my early days, were better acquainted with family history than the present generation.

Nicknames were almost universal seventy years since, and persons of every station were more frequently mentioned in their absence by these arbitrary appellations, than by their family names. They were often applied with great felicity, and were generally (in accordance with the etymology of the word) founded on some personal foible or defect. As they often proved the cause of irritation and quarrels, the disuse of them may be deemed a minor point of social reformation; but they were not without their use, as a

means of convenient distinction in those cases in which, as frequently happened, many families in the same village or neighbourhood bore the same name.

Hospitality, if less costly and ceremonious, was more frequent among all ranks. People made visits without previous notice or formal invitation, and from these casual meetings, both the hosts and the guests, perhaps, derived greater pleasure than they now do from more formal entertainments. What was called *pressing*, or urging a guest to eat and drink, was so much the fashion, that its neglect would have been reckoned a want of kindness and hospitality. Travellers on business, and persons travelling for pleasure, were sure to meet with a hearty welcome from those of their own station with whom they were in the slightest degree acquainted. And it was another proof of the prevailing hospitality of those times, that there then existed a description of persons called "*sorners*," who, though the name survives, have no modern representatives—persons destitute of a fixed home, and possessing slender means of subsistence, who used to lodge by turns, and for many days, or even weeks, at a time, at the houses of their acquaintances, and were treated with as

much attention and generosity as if they had been capable of making a return in kind.

Before the general establishment of poor's-rates, the country was overrun with vagrant beggars. They had access to every house, and received their alms, in meal and bread, which were deposited in bags, or wallets, as they were called, hung over their shoulders. Strolling beggars often travelled in companies, and used to take up their night quarters at the houses of the tenant farmers in the country, who, after entertaining them with a supper of porridge, conducted them to the barns and out-houses for their night's rest. Even so late as 1773, when I came to reside in Jedburgh, this kind of hospitality was continued by a few of the old tenants.

Sociability was another of the characteristics of those times. Expressions of kindness were then more frank and cordial; and even the conventional forms of salutation indicated less distance than is now maintained in ordinary friendly intercourse. Acquaintances of both sexes, when they met after long absence, and sometimes even on the occasion of visiting, saluted with a kiss. I have often, for example, seen this ceremony per-

formed in the streets of Edinburgh, by old friends among my own reverend brethren, when they met at the opening of the General Assembly. The same form was observed between gentlemen and ladies.

Convivial meetings, both in private houses and taverns, often recurred; and were not only allotted to hours of leisure and recreation, but encroached on the time which ought to have been devoted to useful pursuits and professional duties. They were considered a principal source of the enjoyment of life. When acquaintances met on such occasions, conversation was more animated; there were greater ease and frankness of manners, more gladness of heart, more mirth and good humour; and warmer professions of kindness were made use of (and, I believe, often truly) than enter into the ceremonious interviews of modern days, between the most intimate neighbours and near relations. But the borders between virtue and vice are easily overstepped, and the facts now stated naturally lead me to survey the dark side of the character of former times. Intemperance in drinking was frequent, and thought of as a venial blemish, rather than a reprehensible crime. A profusion of wine and spirits was placed to the account of hospitality

and kindness, and an inflexible abstinence from customary indulgence censured as a certain indication of a sullen and niggardly disposition. Even in families which had a reputation for sobriety, on every occasion of social entertainments, the circulation of the bottle continued for many hours after the ladies had withdrawn. On such occasions, and at public festive meetings, there was, indeed, a wanton rivalry in drinking to excess, and a species of merit ascribed to the person who held out longest. At public county meetings, the discussion of business was often followed by a night of revelry and drunkenness. I myself could name not a few gentlemen of good position who were addicted to habitual intemperance. The tenant farmers on the market-days, in like manner, spent too great a portion of their time and money in the public houses. In most of the country towns there were clubs of idle citizens who met at all hours for this kind of fellowship, the reckoning being paid by each member in rotation—a rule which disguised the expense under a semblance of generosity.*

* Such a club as I have described actually existed in Jedburgh fifty years ago.

Intemperance, from being so common and familiar, was accounted a weakness or infirmity rather than a degrading vice. It used to be said that drunkards were enemies to none but themselves. The numerous instances of untimely deaths and embarrassed fortunes, the baneful effects of riotous dissipation, that overwhelmed many families within my remembrance with shame and poverty, furnished a terrible reply to this immoral sophism.

The universal practice sixty years ago of transacting all business of importance—sales, contracts, bargains, etc.—in taverns, was both an inlet for intemperance and a specious apology for it. In Edinburgh, when clients applied for the advice and opinion of counsellors at the bar, the parties always retired from the outer parliament-house to one of the adjacent coffee-houses or dram-shops in the square, the choice of the particular "morning beverage" to be called for being determined by the learned gentleman consulted, before the case was opened to him. This, I take for granted, was the cause of the number of small taverns in the environs of the Court of Session even within the time of my remembrance. The tavern-bill was the first and the last article

in the agent's account of the expenses incurred in a legal process. This description, however, is strictly applicable to a period prior to my personal knowledge, but of the truth of it I can entertain no doubt, having obtained it from trustworthy sources. Mr. Ferguson of Pitfour, who died at an advanced age fifty years ago, was the first Scottish lawyer who made a point of being consulted in his own private lodgings. After the conclusion of a law process a tavern supper was frequent, if not common, and I have myself been both the treater and the treated on such occasions.

It must be added that, from the habits of conversation indulged on the too frequent occasions of excess, a coarseness of thought and language was insensibly contracted, which was not only offensive to the ears of all persons of good taste and proper feeling, but made a wider separation in domestic intercourse between the sexes. If drunkenness, too, was not the only cause, it was certainly one of the principal causes of the more frequent profanation of the name of God, and of the indecent senseless oaths which were mixed with conversation on the most frivolous subjects.

A spirit of religious toleration has been

gradually increasing and improving since the middle of the last century. At a time yet fresh in my memory, the very persons who enjoyed the benefit of toleration, execrated the principle upon which it was founded as subversive of pure religion, and plainly insinuated that if they themselves had been in power they would not have permitted the avowal of any doctrine, or the usage of any form of worship, which they believed to be contrary to the prescribed rules of divine authority. Many of the members of the Established Church, of better education and of unquestionable piety, regarded the indulgence of Episcopacy as a crime on the part of the legislature. Among the lower ranks it was all but universal to confound Prelacy, a name which they gave to Episcopacy, with Popery, and to consider the Established religion of England as chargeable with the guilt of idolatrous worship. The Seceders, or Dissenters from the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, held it sinful in any individual who professed to be a member of their community ever on any occasion to attend public worship in any of the parish churches,—such as offended in this way being subjected to censure, and even expelled from their

community. Nor were the adherents to the Episcopal form of religion less enslaved to bigotry, or more liberal towards the members of the Establishment that had supplanted it. Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and the various sects of Dissenters from both, who had divided among themselves, alike reprobated communion of worship with all who differed from them in religious opinions as sacrilegious and unwarrantable. Religious bigotry was also a bar to social intercourse, and circumscribed the charities of life. There were undoubtedly in those times, both among the clergy and laity, individuals of more enlightened understandings and more generous principles, but it would not have been prudent or safe for such persons to give expression to their sentiments. Inspired with an inborn zeal for the cause of religious liberty, its triumphant progress has been to me a source of unmixed happiness, and has often counterbalanced the grief and bitterness of heart I have suffered, on account of the stupendous public calamities which have occasionally darkened the political horizon during my latter days.

There is hardly any one feature in the present state of society, compared with what it was at the

beginning of my life, which strikes me more than the absence of those outward distinctions which formerly characterized different classes, and not only different classes, but also in a degree now unknown, the individuals of which society was composed. At that time various modes of dress indicated at first sight the rank, the profession, and the age of every individual. Now, even servants are hardly distinguishable in their equipment from their masters and mistresses. The discriminating garb of different trades and professions is laid aside, except when the person to whom it belongs is actually engaged in the labour of his vocation. Age and youth are dressed in the same mode. The conversation and demeanour of people of different rank are more closely assimilated. What used to be called *pedantry* is rarely met with, and found only among persons who have had little acquaintance with the world. This obliteration of the old landmarks which formerly individualised the different members of the community, the natural result of a deeper change in their actual relations to one another, and especially of a less restrained and more frequent intercourse, has denuded the present

generation of much which was interesting, if also sometimes grotesque, in the social life of their forefathers.

Since the commencement of the late reign, a noted change has taken place with respect to the apportionment of political power, both in England and Scotland, and particularly the latter. During the reigns of George I. and George II., the Whigs almost exclusively engrossed the higher offices of administration, and the same partiality obtained in the military departments, and in the subordinate stations of civil government. The Whigs of high rank and influence, however, were too numerous to find employment and reward under any single administration. They consequently split among themselves into factions, which struggled with as much eagerness and animosity for the possession of power as if they had been divided by political principles. Sometimes one faction, sometimes another, was uppermost, and carried off the prize. In all circumstances, however, the honours and emoluments flowing from the Crown, with little intermixture, remained in the hands of the Whigs. Our late gracious sovereign George the Third, consistently

with the principles in which he had been educated, determined to put an end to this monopoly, and to avail himself of the services of the able and faithful among his subjects, to whatever party they belonged. The scandalous abuse and misrepresentation which His Majesty incurred at the beginning of his reign in prosecution of this laudable purpose, are fresh in the memory of the few survivors who were then observant of public affairs.

With respect to the management of political affairs in Scotland, a system still more illiberal and contracted was adopted. All power was deposited in the hands of one individual, understood to be the minister for Scotland; and all the subaltern stations and executive offices were dealt out in conformity with his advice and recommendation. The list of the sixteen Scots' peers at the general election was dictated by him, and the majority of the representatives of counties and burghs were chosen, either in obedience to his instructions, or with his consent and approbation. He stood interposed, as a sort of middle man, between the government and the people. All public measures of importance originated with

him. He was the sole channel of solicitation to ministers, and all favours passed through his hands. Nor was his influence restricted to the disposal of places in the nomination of Government. He had often an initiative, and always a controlling power in appointments which were nominally in the gift of corporate bodies and of individuals, by virtue of their official or patrimonial privileges. I know it to be a fact, that Provost Drummond, the most meritorious benefactor of the community over which he presided, did not find himself at liberty to promise any preferment at the disposal of the Town-Council of Edinburgh, without the previous consent of Lord Milton, the delegate and political agent of Archibald Duke of Argyle. To such an extreme was this scheme of universal patronage stretched, that it was always deemed prudent to obtain Lord Milton's goodwill before making any application, even for places of the most inconsiderable emolument and importance. It was fortunate for the public that, in the enlightened scheme for filling the chairs in the University with the ablest candidates, the Duke of Argyle concurred with Provost Drummond.

There was always a party in Scotland which

resisted the overbearing power of the Scotch minister; but all who belonged to it were considered, for a long time after the accession of the Hanoverian family, as disaffected and hostile to the existing dynasty. There were also, at the latter end of the preceding reign, a few representatives from Scotland of unsuspected loyalty, who, on the ground of personal merit, made their way to ministerial favours and promotions, independently of the patronage of the Scottish Premier. But the fetters of aristocratic despotism, in this part of the United Kingdom, were not completely broken, nor independence secured, till the accession of George III.

A spirit of philanthropy is now more general, more active, and more efficient, than in my early life. It is a remarkable fact, that, though the cruelty and infamy of the African slave-trade were understood, and acknowledged, and pathetically described in popular publications a hundred years since, yet no attempt for the abolition of it was made or suggested till the end of last century. Different treaties with foreign states were brought under the review of the legislature, and were the occasion of interesting debates, in which modi-

fications of the slave-trade were proposed and adopted; but the voice of humanity was never lifted up, no remonstrance urged, no whisper of pity heard, within the walls of St. Stephen's Chapel. The ardour and perseverance with which the removal of this enormity of national guilt and reproach was prosecuted, by persons of different political principles, and of all ranks and descriptions, are demonstrative proofs of the extension of a spirit of humanity.

The repeal of the penal statutes affecting the Roman Catholics; the relief granted to Protestant dissenters in the case of subscriptions; the forbearance of prosecutions for disobedience to remaining legal restrictions; the restoration of the forfeited estates in Scotland; the augmentation of the pensions of the widows of military officers; the liberal donations in aid of the plans of extensive public utility, and for the mitigation of calamities, domestic and foreign; the improved state of prisons, suggested by the benevolent Howard; the kindness with which the French emigrants and prisoners were entertained in every corner of the country; and particularly, the sympathy and kindness shewn to the persecuted

Popish priests, afford similar evidence of the same fact.

Hospitals, free schools, bequests for the supply of indigence and the relief of various forms of misery, are monuments of the beneficence of ancient times; but these were generally the fruits of the liberal disposition of wealthy individuals. The charitable efforts of collective bodies or associations, so frequent in our own times, are an evidence of the diffusion of a spirit of benevolent enterprise. There hardly exists any species of calamity that has not attracted a general co-operation for its mitigation or removal.

Of the progress of charitable efforts in this country, I myself have had the most satisfactory evidence. During the long period of my ministerial service, the poor have occasionally been reduced to extreme distress by the scarcity of provisions, particularly in the years 1783, 1796, 1799, 1800. On all these occasions, heritors, magistrates, individuals of every description, have, not only by increasing the parochial assessments, but by extraordinary contributions and private donations, interposed so effectually, that not a single instance has occurred, in my experience, of

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any family or any individual being unprovided with the necessary means of subsistence; and I have reason to believe, that the same liberality, with very few exceptions, has pervaded every district of Scotland. I have had occasion to inspect the records of similar distress in the end of the seventeenth, and the commencement of the eighteenth century. Nothing could be more deplorable than the state of the poor in those times. In spite of the constant emigration, multitudes dragged out a miserable existence only by the use of articles unfit for human food; and thousands perished of starvation.*

My experience has indicated, not only an increase, but a growing increase of attention to the sufferings of the poor, even within the period in which I have seen it put to the test. In 1783, the required aid was given, but tardily, and the schemes of relief proposed encountered some opposition. In 1796 there was less hesitation and more liberality than in 1783. But in 1799 and 1800, the promptitude of all classes, in my own parish at least, anticipated solicitation, as their bounty, in respect of its amount, exceeded expectation.

* See *supra*, p. 305.

I have omitted many topics which might have afforded me not less curious illustrations of the characteristic differences in the social habits and condition of the country within the period of my earlier and later life. I cannot now enter on so wide a subject as that of its literature. In authorship alone, it has made advances perhaps unparalleled in any former age, or in any other country. Among its writers in various departments, it may suffice to name—Dr. Robertson, David Hume, Adam Smith, Dr. Adam Ferguson, Lord Kames, Mr. Mackenzie, Gilbert Stuart, Dr. Campbell of Aberdeen, Dugald Stewart, Dr. Hugh Blair, Dr. Beattie, Mr. Logan,* Dr. Cullen,† Dr. Black,‡ Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Monboddo, Robert Burns, and Mr. Walter Scott—most of them my contemporaries, all of them personally known to me, and some of them my intimate friends.

* Rev. John Logan (born 1748, died 1788), author of the *Ode to the Cuckoo*, the *Braes of Yarrow*, and other well-known lyrics; and of posthumous *Sermons*, which were edited by Principal Robertson.—Ed.

† William Cullen, M.D., born 1709, died 1790.

‡ Joseph Black, the illustrious chemist, born at Bourdeaux in 1728, and died in 1799.—Ed.

CHAPTER X.

1800-1814.

FROM the time of my last visit to London, till the period at which I now write —a space of fourteen years—many interesting events have taken place in my family, some of them of a very pleasing nature, others inexpressibly painful. . . . .

It is one of the conditions on which long life is granted, that we must survive many of those friends without whom the gift becomes comparatively valueless; and during the last few years I have suffered very much from this cause. Even in my own immediate circle, Mrs. Somerville's brother, Mr. William Charters, of the Indian Commissariat, one of the ablest men I ever knew, and also one of the most estimable, died in 1806; and our son-in-law and neighbour, Mr. Walter

Riddell, whose connection had, for nine years, been a source of unmixed enjoyment to us, in the autumn of 1809. The bitterest ingredient, however, in the cup of my affliction has been the death of my dear wife, which happened on the 17th December 1809, in the sixty-fifth year of her age. The loss of one so much beloved, and so highly valued, made a breach in my happiness which no lapse of time, and no prosperity of outward circumstances can repair. Since our separation four years ago, not a day has passed over my head without a melancholy remembrance of her who, during forty years, was the partner of all my cares and pleasures.

She was endowed with an uncommon share of good sense, and with refined taste, which she had cultivated all her life, and found a source of constant enjoyment. It was an instance of her penetration which may be worth specifying, that she very early discerned the rising genius of Mr. Walter Scott, and was among the first to predict his future celebrity. While he was yet young, just emerging from boyhood, he occasionally visited me when making excursions into the border districts in prosecution of those antiquarian researches

for which he always shewed an instinctive predilection; and he used to entertain us with his conversation on the subject of the old traditions of the neighbourhood, repeating with an astonishing readiness of memory, many of the ballads he had picked up, and which are now published in the Border Minstrelsy.* My wife always said she was confident he would soon make a brilliant figure as a man of letters. She survived to derive exquisite gratification from the perusal of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*. That in which above all, however, she excelled, was the discharge of relative and domestic duties. She was more than any person I ever knew absorbed in affection for her children, and careful in providing for their comfort, and that of her household and visitors. Notwithstanding her superior intellectual endowments, fitting her for enjoying and

* See Lockhart's *Life of Sir W. Scott*, chap. iii., for an account of those rambles into Liddesdale, to which the poet "owed much of the materials of his Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders," and the first of which was made in the year 1792. His companion in most of them was Mr. Robert Shortreed, the sheriff-substitute of Roxburgh—a parishioner of Dr. Somerville's; and Jedburgh seems to have been usually the starting-point. It appears (Lockhart's *Life*, chap. viii.; and *Minstrelsy*, vol. iii., p. 127) that Dr. Somerville had taken some active interest in this first important literary undertaking of Sir Walter Scott.—Ed.

contributing to the enjoyment of general society, her whole happiness was sought and found in her own home, and among her own family.

If, however, during these years, I have had great sorrows, I have to acknowledge at the same time many concurrent blessings. Among them has been the settlement in this country of my eldest son, Dr. William Somerville, who had been long abroad in different parts of the world in the public service. In the end of the year 1811, he returned from Canada with the Governor-General Sir James Craig, whose health had been declining, and who had obtained leave of absence for my son, that he might have the benefit of his advice. My son was released from this friendly service by Sir James' death in February 1812. He then held the appointment of Deputy-Inspector of Hospitals, and the Comptrollership of the Customs at Quebec, with ample salaries, and had, I believe, the Duke of York's promise of being promoted to the rank of Inspector-General of Hospitals in Canada, which would have doubled his half-pay on the return of peace. A pleasing event decided him to relinquish these advantages, and to remain in this country—a renewal of in-

tercourse with his cousin Mrs. Greig (Miss Mary Fairfax*), having led to their marriage, which took place on the 18th May 1812.

To myself this connection was on every account peculiarly gratifying. Miss Fairfax had been born and nursed in my house, her father being at that time abroad on public service. She afterwards often resided in my family, was occasionally my scholar, and was looked upon by me and my wife as if she had been one of our own children. I can truly say, that next to them she was the object of our most tender regard. Her ardent thirst of knowledge, her assiduous application to study, and her eminent proficiency in literature, and in science and the fine arts, have procured her a celebrity rarely attained by any of her sex; but she never displays any pretensions to superiority, while the affability of her temper, and the gentleness of her manners, afford constant resources of gratification to her family and intimate friends. But what, above all other circumstances,

* The celebrated authoress of *The Connection of the Physical Sciences*, and *Physical Geography*. Mrs. Somerville's first husband—also a cousin of her own—was Samuel Greig, Esq., a son of Admiral Greig (see *supra*, p. 224). A brief account of her father, Vice-Admiral Sir William Fairfax, will be found at p. 299, and *note*.—Ed.

rendered my son's choice acceptable to me was, that it had been the anxious though secret desire of my dear wife.

A few months after his marriage Dr. William Somerville was appointed Deputy-Inspector of Hospitals at Portsmouth, an appointment which he had the good fortune to have almost immediately exchanged for a similar one at Edinburgh. This completed my happiness, by bringing him within the sphere of frequent intercourse with myself and his other relations in Scotland. My only other son* had some time before this entered into business in Edinburgh as a Writer to the Signet, under good encouragement, especially from Lord Somerville. It has now been my happiness, for three generations to live on terms of unchanging friendship and confidence with the representatives of the head of our family; and as this same advantage was enjoyed by my father, I have seen it transmitted to my children.

I am now, while closing these memoirs, advancing in the seventy-fourth year of my age, and the forty-ninth of my ministry. I have never, since I recollect, been confined a single day to

* Samuel Somerville, Esq. of Lowood, who died June 18, 1825.—Ed.

bed by indisposition, except in consequence of the accident of a fall from my horse, above forty-eight years ago. I have not, perhaps, been more than once or twice disabled for the performance of my public duty every Sabbath day, except during my recent confinement occasioned by the rupture of the *tendo Achillis.* Though infirmities begin to besiege me, they are slighter than those which are incident to the generality of persons at my advanced age, which, under the blessing of Providence, I ascribe to my habitual temperance and regularity in exercise. Manifold, indeed, to me, have been the bounties of Providence. May I be thankful for them; and may the large experience I have had of the divine goodness confirm my trust, and encourage my hope in God!

INDEX.

Abernethy, Bishop, 193
Adam, Mr., 110, 237, 239
Adolphus, Mr., 314
Aislaby, John, Esq., 175
Alemoor, Lord, 108, 116
Alexander, Provost, 354
Alison, Mr., 261
Annandale, Marquis of, 260
Anne, Queen, 113, 274
Anson, Lord, 6
Anstruther, Sir John, 239, 241
Arden, Captain, 320, 321
Argyle, Archibald, Duke of, 85, 380
Argyle, John, Duke of, 272
Armstrong, Mr., of Sorbie, 357

Baillie, Mr., of Jerviswood, 291
Balbirnie, Balfours of, 49
Balfour, Mr., of Pilrig, Professor of Moral Philosophy, 16, 17
Balfour, Miss, 50
Bannatyne of Corhouse, 3
Bannerman, Rev. Mr., 85
Barton, Mr., 282
Beattie, Dr. 385
Beckford, Alderman, 149
Beddoes, Dr., 138
Bedford, Duke of, 55
Bennet, Sir William, 30
Beufflers, Marshal, 301
Black, Dr., 385
Blair, Lord President, 40, 41
Blair, Hugh, D.D., 57, 166, 167, 244, 257, 385
Blair, John, LL.D., 141
Blair, Miss, 166
Bland, General, 38
Bogue, Rev. Mr., 105
Bolingbroke, Lord, 272
Bonar, Rev. Mr., 169
Boston, Rev. Thomas, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173
Bowmaker, Robert, D.D., 140
Boyle, Mr., 286
Breadalbane, Lord, 169
Brown, Dr. John, M.D., 134-140
Brown, Mr., of Ellistown, 361
Brown, Mr., 345
Brunonius, Joannes (Dr. John Brown), 134-140
Brunton, family of, 49
Buccleuch, Duchess of, 285, 287, 289
Buccleuch, Duke of, 142, 177, 332
Buchan, Lord, 42, 311
Burges, George, Esq. of Greslee, 38, 49
Burges, Sir James, M.P., 32, 39, 303, 315, 321
Burke, Mr., 220, 221, 222, 223, 250, 251, 264
Burnet, Alexander (Archbishop), 4
Burnet, Bishop, 146, 147
Burnet, James (Lord Monboddo), 111
Burns, Robert, 202, 385
Burnside, Mr., 5
Bute, Lord, 52-55, 307, 308
Butler, Bishop, 128

Camden, Lord, 151
Campbell, Lord, 35
Campbell, Mr., of Cawdor, 153
Campbell, Principal, of Aberdeen, 95, 385
Cappe, Dr., 178, 183
Carfrae, Rev. Patrick, 50
Carieston, family of, 49
Carlyle, Dr., of Inveresk, 116, 249
Carnegie, Lord James, 32, 33
Carnegie, Sir James, 33
Carre, Mr., of Nisbet, 361
Carrick, Mr., 157, 213, 244

Catharine, Empress, 225
Cavendish, Sir Henry, 153
Cavers, Lady, 4
Chalmers, Dr., 50
Chalmers, Mr. George (author of "Caledonia"), 287, 312, 313
Charters, Miss, 158, 159, 166, 387
Charters, Mr. Samuel, 41, 166, 167, 174, 175, 294
Charters, Mr. S., of Patna, 294
Charters, Samuel, D.D., 50, 132, 133, 166, 195, 227, 228, 240, 263
Charters, Mr. William, 212, 386
Chesterfield, Lord, 155
Chilvers, Mr., 322
Clarke, Dr. Samuel, 128
Cleghorn, Mr. (Professor of Moral Philosophy), 16
Clerk, Dr., M.D., 138
Clerk, Lady, 280
Clerk, Rev. Mr., 133
Clerk, Sir John, 280, 286
Cole, Mr., 276
Colville, Miss, 34, 37
Cook, Captain, 321
Cook, Dr. George, 43
Cook, John, Professor of Moral Philosophy, St. Andrews, 43
Corehouse, Lord, 3
Covington, Lord, 108
Coxe Archdeacon, 256, 286, 289, 290, 300, 313
Craig, General Sir James, 296, 389
Craigie, Robert, of Glendoick (Lord President), 326
Cranstoun, Mr. George (Lord Corehouse), 3
Crosbie, Mr., 101, 102
Cruikshank, Mr., schoolmaster of Dunse, 8, 135
Cullen, Dr., M.D., 137, 385
Cumberland, Duke of, 93, 170, 247
Cuming, Dr., Regius Professor of Divinity, 18, 19, 84, 85, 86, 301

Dalgleish, Dr., 228
Dalrymple, Sir David, 110, 271, 385
Dalrymple, Sir John, 110, 116, 206, 258
Dalziel, Mr. Andrew, Professor, Greek, 11
Dartmouth, Lord, 286
Davidson, Nathaniel (Consul), 35, 36, 245, 246
Davidson, Mr. of Stewartfield, 35
Davidson, Dr., 36
Davison, Rev. Isaac, 156
Dempster, George, Esq. of Dunnichen, M.P., 98
D'Eon, Chevalier, 148
Devonshire, Duke of, 281
Dick, Dr., Minister of College Church, 58, 98
Dickson, Rev. Adam, 7, 176
Dickson, Mr. James, 42
Dickson, Miss, 118
Dirom, Colonel, 269
Dobie, Mr., 119, 190
Dodd, Dr., 155
Doddridge, Dr., 144
Douglas, Lord, 121
Douglas, Dr., Bishop of Carlisle, 249
Douglas, Christopher, M.D., 253
Douglas, Sir William, of Cavers, 4
Douglas, Dr., of Cavers, 176
Douglas, Rev. Dr., of Galashiels, 133
Douglas, Rev. Mr., 169, 173
Dreghorn, Lord, 91, 105
Drummond, Provost, 22, 45, 46, 47, 48, 91, 104, 380
Drysdale, Dr., Minister of Tron Church, 61, 79
Dugdale, Lieutenant, 224
Duncan, Admiral, 298, 299
Dundas, Henry, Viscount Melville, 40, 41, 97, 192, 211, 212, 233, 241, 284, 303, 304, 314, 315, 320
Dundas, Mr., of Arniston, 109
Dunning, Mr., 188

Edwards, Bryan, 323, 324
Eglinton, Earl of, 39
Elibank, Lord, 5
Elliot, Admiral, 223
Elliot, Governor, 223
Elliot, Sir Gilbert, of Minto, 41, 97, 120, 125, 141, 150, 152, 167, 177, 178, 354
Elliot, Sir Gilbert (Lord Minto), 122, 125, 177, 208, 211, 220, 221, 223, 230, 231, 232, 236, 238, 239, 240, 241, 250, 251, 252, 271, 284, 285, 300
Elliot, Lady, 34, 126
Elliot, Sir Gilbert, of Stobbs, 327, 361
Elliot, Right Hon. William, 208
Elliot, Mr., of Cavers, 132, 133, 140
Elliot, Mr., of Arkleton, 136
Elliot, Mr. Hugh, 125
Elliot, Mr. John, 354
Elliot, Mr., of Midlem Mill, 142
Elliot, Dr., of Otterburn, 208
Elliot, Mrs., of Rosebank, 1
Ellis, Mr., 252
Erskine, Lord, 239, 240
Erskine, Hon. Thomas, 239, 240, 274
Erskine, Mr., of Cardross, Professor of Scots Law, 61
Erskine, Dr. John, 14, 37, 61, 62, 99
Erskine, Mr. Ralph, 67

Fair, Mr., 202
Fairbairn, Rev. Mr., 101
Fairfax, Sir William G., 230, 298
Fairfax, Miss Mary, 390
Farquhar, Sir Walter, 322

Ferguson, Sir Adam, 237, 241, 280
Ferguson, Dr. Adam, 385
Ferguson, Mr., of Craigdarroch, 228
Ferguson, Mr., of Mulin, 96
Ferguson, Mr., of Pitfour, 108, 109, 374
Fielding, Sir John, 179, 182
Fletcher, Andrew, Lord Milton, 221, 331, 380
Foote, Mr., Comedian, 71, 72
Forbes, Sir William, of Pitsligo, 291
Fordyce, Lady Margaret, 315
Fordyce, Dr., 155, 156, 184
Foster, James, D.D., 144
Fox, Mr., 152, 226, 227, 234, 235, 239, 241, 243, 258, 259, 262
Franklin, Dr., 143
Fullarton, Colonel William, 246, 269

Geddes, Mrs., of Kirkurd, 34, 35
George II., 51
George III., 51, 52, 100, 302, 306, 321, 379, 381
Gerard, Dr., Professor of Divinity, Aberdeen, 96
Gibson, Rev. Mr., 167
Gillespie, Rev. Thomas, Minister of Carnock, 85, 172
Godolphin, Earl of, 286, 272
Gordon, Baron, 280
Gowdie, Mr. John, Professor of Divinity, 19, 43
Grafton, Duke of, 187
Grant, Sir Archibald, 280
Grantley, Lord, 152
Gregory, Dr. James, Professor, 121
Gregory, Dr., 225
Gregory, Dr. John, 120
Gregory, Rev. Dr., 311
Greig, Admiral, 224, 225
Greig, Mrs., 390
Grierson, Rev. Mr., 6
Grenville, William, Lord, 321
Grenville, Right Hon. George, 187
Grey, General, 184
Guerchy, Count De, 148

Hailes, Lord, 110, 271
Haldane, Miss, 119
Halifax, Lord, 286
Halliburton, Mr., of Muirhouselaw, 328
Hamilton, Dr. James,
Hamilton, Duke of, 121
Hamilton, Robert, Professor of Divinity, 17, 63, 64, 228
Hamilton, Rev. William, Principal, 17, 64
Hamilton, William, of Gilbertfield, 30
Hardie, Dr., of Ashkirk, 225
Hardie, Dr. Thomas (Professor), 300, 301
Hardwick, Earl of, 211, 256, 286, 300, 306, 315
Hardwick, Lord Chancellor, 151
Harley, Mr., 272, 286
Hatfield, Mr., 302
Henderson, Mr., 162-163
Hill, Professor, 228
Holland, Lord, 153, 259
Home, Reverend John (Author of "Douglas"), 115, 116, 120, 247
Horsely, Dr., 219
Howard, John, 382
Howe, Lord, 298
Hume, Mr., of Ninewells, 361
Hume, Mr. David, 16, 17, 120, 122, 128, 135, 142, 247, 258, 385
Hunter, Dr., 183
Hunter, Mr. (Professor of Greek), 11
Huskisson, Mr., 314

Innes, Mr., 162, 165

Jackson, Dr., 201
James II., 113, 258, 302
Jardine, Rev. John, D.D., 47, 91, 92, 93
Jardine, Sir Henry, 93
Jeffrey, Lord, 221
Johnson, Samuel, 105, 120, 143
Johnston, Dr., 228
Johnston, Mr., 246
Johnstone, Colonel James, 152
Johnstone, Mr. (bookseller), 231
Johnstone, Mr. (Sir William Pulteney), 98
Johnstone, Sir James, of Westerhall, 215

Kames, Lord, 41, 111, 121, 361, 385
Ker, Dr., minister of Forfar, 97
Ker, Lord Robert, 177
Kippis, Dr., 145, 184, 209, 212, 312
Knox, Dr., 175
Knox, Margaret, 175

Laing, Mr. Malcolm, 256, 258
Lapsley, Mr., 228
Lee, Mr., 152
Leighton, Archbishop, 4
Leitchfield, Earl of, 55
Lindesay, Dr., 202
Lindsay, Lady Margaret, 39
Loch, Mr., W.S., 34, 212
Lockhart, Colonel, 3
Lockhart, Dr., 3
Lockhart, John Gibson, 3
Lockhart, Mr. (Lord Covington) 108, 109, 110
Logan, Mr., 385
Lonsdale, Lord, 257
Lookup, Provost of Jedburgh, 337
Lothian, Marquis of, 169
Lothian, William, D.D., 43

Loughborough, Lord Chancellor, 97
Love, Mr., 157
Lowth, Dr., Bishop of Oxford, 154
Lowther, Sir James (Lord Lonsdale), 257
Luttrel, Colonel, 152, 153
Lyttleton, 120

Macartney, Lord, 54, 307-310, 314
Macaulay, Lord, 273
Macfarlan, Duncan, minister of Drymen, 96
Macfarlane, Dr. John, 43
Mackay, Mr. John, Professor of History, 20
Mackenzie, Mr. (Man of Feeling), 247, 385
Mackenzie, Mr., of Delvin, 331
Mackintosh, Mr., 228
Macknight, Dr. James, 167, 173, 228
Maclagan, Rev. Mr., minister of Melrose, 133, 178, 183
Maclaurin, Mr. Colin, Professor of Mathematics, 20, 104
Macpherson's History, 206, 207, 212, 258
Madan, Rev. Martin, 156
Majendie, Dr., 323
Malcolm, Mr., of Burnfoot, 261
Malmesbury, Lord, 239
Mansfield, Lord, 151, 272
Marlborough, Duke of, 269, 272, 286
Martin, Rev. John, 43, 133, 228
Matthewson (forger), 180-182
Meikle, Mr., 148
Melgund, Viscount, and Earl of Minto, 123
Melville, General, 215-218
Menzies, Sir William, 305
Milton, Lord, 22, 331, 380
Minto, Earl of, 221
Minto, first Earl of (see Elliot, Sir Gilbert)
Minto, Lord Justice-Clerk, 182
Mitchell, Mr., 228
Monboddo, Lord, 111, 385
Moncreiff, Sir H., 16, 43, 61, 228, 229, 237
Monro, Dr. Alexander (Professor of Anatomy), 19, 21, 22
Monro, Dr. Alexander (secundus), 21
Montagu, Duke of, 287
Montagu, Mrs., 120
Montagu, Wortley, 35
Montgomerie, Lady, 39
Montolieu, Lieutenant-Colonel, 39
Moore, Dr. John, Archbishop of Canterbury, 233, 234
Moore, Mr., 311
Mountmorres, Lord, 257
Murdoch, Mr., 148
Murison, Principal of St. Andrews, 96
Murray, Mr., M.P., 271
Murray, Mr. (bookseller), 149, 247

Newcastle, Duke of, 55
Nisbet, Lord, 361
North, Lord, 152, 187, 188, 189, 199, 200, 309, 310
Norton, Sir Fletcher, 152

Ogle, Mr., M.P. for Dublin, 279
Onslow, Lord, 271
Ord, Robert (Chief Baron of Exchequer), 331
Orford, Lord, 256
Orlow, Count, 225
Ormiston, Mrs., 276
Ormonde, Lord, 315
Oswald, Dr., minister of Methven, 86
Oswald, Mr., of Dunnikeir, 41, 271
Oswald, Rev. Mr., 156
Oxford, Lord, 275

Park, Mungo, 323, 324
Peterborough, Earl of, 286
Philip II. of Spain, 88
Pindar, Peter (Dr. Wolcot), 247-249
Pinkerton, Rev. Mr., 49
Pitt, Mr., 51, 52, 214, 215, 226, 227, 233, 241, 263, 267, 284, 303, 304, 310
Pope, Mr., 246, 316
Porteous, Dr., Bishop of London, 322
Portland, Duke of, 211, 275, 284, 285, 293, 300, 301, 302, 303
Price, Dr., of Newington, 105, 106, 145, 146, 156
Priestley, Dr., 232
Pringle, Mr., of Haining (Lord Alemoor), 108
Pringle, Dr. (afterwards Sir John), 21, 142, 143
Pulteney, Sir William, 98, 120, 236, 241, 260-262

Queensberry, Duke of, 287

Ramsay, Allan, 29, 30, 31, 32
Rennell, Major, 314
Reoch, Mr. William, 72
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 120
Riccaltoun, Rev. Robert, 127-130, 195
Riddell, Mr. Walter, 387
Robertson, Principal, 14, 23, 35, 61, 85, 94, 95, 96, 98, 101, 121, 123, 244, 245, 246, 257, 268, 270-275, 284, 285, 287, 288, 385
Robertson, Rev. James, D.D., Professor of Hebrew, 18
Robertson, Rev. John, of Kilmarnock, 43
Robson, Mr., 276
Robson, Mrs., 282
Rockingham, Marquis of, 187

Romaines, Rev. Mr., 156
Rosslyn, Earl of, 97
Rosslyn, Lord, 239
Rose, Dr., of Chiswick, 141, 143, 145, 184
Roxburghe, Duke of, 177, 302, 306, 353
Runnington, Serjeant, 246
Russell, Mr. (Lord Advocate), 228
Rutherfurd, Mr., of Fairnington, 328

SACHEVEREL, 273, 274
St. Clair, Sir James, 239
St. John, Mr., 286 (See Bolingbroke)
Scott, Sir Walter, 385, 387, 388
Scott, Dr. Robert, 24, 25
Scott, Mr., 341
Scotts of Whiteslade, 24, 25, 26
Seward, Mr., 246, 280
Seward, Miss, 280
Sheridan, Thomas, 56
Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, 56, 252
Short, Mr., 15
Shrewsbury, Duke of, 285
Siddons, Mrs., 213
Silverstop, Mrs., 276
Smith, Adam, 247, 385
Smith, Andrew, 43
Smyth, Professor, 258
Somerville, James (eleventh Lord), 3
Somerville, James (thirteenth Lord), 6, 31, 35, 92
Somerville, Lord (fourteenth), 32, 112, 113, 157, 178, 295
Somerville, Lord (fifteenth), 306, 391
Somerville, George, of Corehouse, 3, 126
Somerville, Mr. Hugh, W.S., 126
Somerville, Samuel, of Lowood, 391
Somerville, Mr. Thomas, 4
Somerville, William (poet), 30, 31
Somerville, William, M.D., 295, 389, 391
Somerville, Mrs. Mary, 390
Somervilles of Cambusnethan, 3
Somervilles of Drum, 3
Southesk, Earl of, 32, 33
Spottiswood, Mr., 291
Stanhope, Earl, 272
Stevenson, Dr., Professor of Logic, 12, 13, 14, 20
Stewart, Mr., of Allanton, 256
Stewart, Andrew, 121
Stewart, Colonel, of Stewartfield, 327
Stewart, Mr. Dugald, 14, 122, 244, 257, 385
Stewart, Mr. George (Professor of Latin), 11
Stewart, Dr. John (Professor of Natural Philosophy), 14
Stewart, Dr. Matthew, 14, 15
Stewart, Mr. R. (Professor of Natural Philosophy), 20
Strahan, Mr., 142, 143
Strahan and Cadell, 244, 245, 291, 292, 293
Stuart, Gilbert, 148, 149, 275, 385

THOMSON (the Poet), 64, 129, 132
Thomson, Rev. Mr., 79
Thurlow, Lord, 121
Townshend, Lord, 286
Townshend, Charles, 55, 326
Tullidelph, Principal of St. Andrews, 96

VERGY, Mons. Du, 148
Vincent, Dr. (Dean of Westminster), 141

WALES, Prince of (son of George II.), 53
Wales, Prince of (George IV.), 251, 252
Walker, Rev. Mr. (High Church), 59, 228
Walker, Mr., of Leeds, 277, 278
Wallace, Dr. (New North Church), 59, 60, 104
Walpole, Horace, 148, 153, 160
Walpole, Sir Robert, 310
Warden, John, 43
Wardlaw, Mrs., 50
Warner, Mr., 322
Washington, 222, 223
Watson, Dr., Bishop of Landaff, 1
Webster, Dr., 102 to 107
Wedderburn Mr. (Lord Chancellor), 97, 110, 116, 151, 152
Wellesley, Colonel, 314
Welsh, Mr., 228
Wentworth, Viscount, 39
Wesley, John, 252, 254
Whitefield, George, 66 to 73
White, Rev. Mr., 135
Wilkes, Mr., 123, 146, 149, 153, 154, 160, 274
William III., 206, 212, 275, 285
Williams, Rev. David, 215, 218
Winchester, Rev. Mr., 168
Windham, Mr., 220, 239
Winnington, 274
Wishart, Principal, 19
Wishart, Dr. George, 60, 142
Witherspoon, Dr., Minister of Paisley, 99, 100
Woide, Dr., 210, 211
Wolcot, Dr. (Peter Pindar), 247-249
Woodhouselee, Lord, 111

YATES, Mrs., 213
York, Duke of, 113
York, Mr. Charles, 151
Young, Dr. Walter, Minister of Erskine, 42, 43

Somerville, Thomas..

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My own life & times.